

Saipan Tribune

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INSIDE



Juan Pan Honored

American Red Cross volunteer and leader Juan Tenorio Guerrero was recognized yesterday by the Legislature for his two decades of service with the organization.

Page 6



Saipan Ice Turns 19

Anthony Pellegrino, who built the first water company on Saipan, is probably one of the people that the Commonwealth won't forget any time soon for one outstanding reason: he has provided the community clean drinking water.

Page 22



Bad Weather Haiku

Today's group of students' haiku/senryu marks the fourth school year that Hopwood Junior High School students have had their poems published in the Saipan Tribune. Today's poems are a haven for the havoc created by recent typhoons and a harbor for some creative poetic student histories.

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Bill wants alien workers' transfer abolished

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Nonresident workers may no longer transfer from one employer to another if a legislative measure that proposes to

repeal a statute allowing the transfers becomes law.

House Rep. Joseph DeLeon Guerrero introduced House Bill 14-22, which has been pending before the Judicial and Governmental Operations and the

Commerce and Tourism committees. Possible action by the House on the measure may come months after the adoption of Labor regulations that now allow nonresident workers to engage in multiple employments.

The bill seeks to repeal the section of the Commonwealth Code that provides for procedures and requirements for nonresident workers to transfer from one employer to another during the period

See BILL on Page 12

Azmar on probe: Bring it on

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Azmar International, the company that wants to mine pozzolan deposits on Pagan, yesterday expressed its support for an investigation on allegations that the company intended to secretly take possession of historical artifacts that might be discovered on the island.

"I wish any legitimate source would look into this allegation. I encourage it. They will quickly find out that these allegations are malicious and completely false," said Azmar chair and chief executive officer Kenneth Moore.

The allegations stemmed from an unsigned draft employment contract allegedly belonging to Azmar. The draft contract seeks to strictly prohibit any employee from disclosing any information on artifacts that may be discovered at the mining site, with the company claiming sole ownership of any find.

Upon being raised by House Rep. Joseph DeLeon Guerrero during a session Monday, Speaker Benigno Fitial tasked the legal counsel to look into the matter. Fitial also asked the Marianas Public Lands Authority to suspend or revoke any mining permit that might have been granted to Azmar.

Earlier news reports said the MPLA

See AZMAR on Page 12

CUC has eight delinquent audit recommendations

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has yet to comply with eight audit recommendations—two of which date from as far back as 1995—from the Office of the Public Auditor.

Based on OPA's audit recommendations tracking system report from 1995 to 2003, CUC has eight resolved and delinquent recommendations. This means that the agency had satisfied OPA that it could not take immediate action on the issues, but allowed the recommendations to be left outstanding for over 180 days.

OPA's latest follow-up letter to CUC regarding the recommendations was is-

See CUC on Page 12



JAIME VERGARA

SAME OLD, SAME OLD

San Vicente Elementary School principal Janet Villagomez stands at the end of a flooded walkway Wednesday afternoon after an hour-long rain once again flooded the campus. School officials, students, and parents are now circulating a petition asking the CNMI government to do something about the drainage system in the area.

'Marianas' bland as campaign come-on—Tudela

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Saipan Mayor's Office has criticized the use of the term "Marianas" in the Marianas Visitors Authority's new marketing and promotion strategy, say-

ing it is bland and may create ill feeling with Guam.

Replying to MVA's request for comments on the See My Marianas Campaign 2005, Mayor Juan B. Tudela maintained that most people in the CNMI's primary tourism markets are familiar

with the brand names Saipan, Tinian, and Rota—but not the word Marianas.

"The islands are best known by recognizable brand names as Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Marianas is not only bland, but is also not an [exclusive] lexicon.

See MARIANAS on Page 12

Local

diabetes
+green

world resort

camacho

cb cruz

cars unlimited

hardt

mcdo

Southbound lanes closed tomorrow

The Department of Public Safety Traffic Section announced yesterday that the southbound lanes between Micro Beach and the Minachom Atdao Pavilion in Susupe will be closed early tomorrow morning to allow safe passage of participants in the All Schools Fall Island Relay.

According to DPS public information officer Rose T. Ada-Hocog, the road will be coned off by 5am.

Also, traffic along all major intersections between the Micro Beach and the Susupe pavilion will be monitored by police officers to ensure safety. All motorists are encouraged to take precaution as cones will be placed at the intersections as well as other closed locations.

The event is slated to kick off at 6:30am, with racers making their way south to Kilili Beach, across the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. The participants would then cross Beach Road and make their way to the Oleai Sports Complex track and field facility, where the race would end.

Officers would also be stationed at the crossing site and will stop northbound traffic when participants are crossing to allow safe passage.

Ada-Hocog said normal traf-

fic on closed areas would resume as soon as all racers have passed through.

Also, spectators and supporters interested in cheering along Beach Road may do so, but are urged to find locations as early as possible as they would be restricted from traveling. Spectators may also station themselves at the switch off points to cheer the runners.

Further, vehicles will not be allowed to enter the Oleai Sports Complex's northern entrance, as it will be closed off for passage of the racers. Vehicles may enter through the southern entrance and middle entrance.

The event, hosted by the Northern Mariana Islands Track and Field Federation, will feature teams of five students ranging between six to 18 years of age from both public and private schools.

Each team must have a support vehicle for pick up and drop off of racers. Each member will run one mile before switching off to a teammate, like in other relays, until the team finishes the race.

Only officials and support vehicles will be allowed passage through the closed areas.

For more information, contact the DPS Traffic Section at 664-9084/5. *(Shan Seman)*

COMMUNITY Briefs

DPS checkpoint today

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section will be conducting a sobriety/DUI checkpoint today, Sept. 17, 2004.

The first checkpoint will be from 7pm to 8:15pm along 2W Highway Garapan in front of the Garapan Central Park. The second checkpoint will be from 9pm to 10:15pm along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road by the CUC Waterloo Station.

Each checkpoint will last at least 1 hour and 15 minutes at each location. This activity is part of the Department of Public Safety's efforts to deter and detect drunk/intoxicated drivers and ensure that all vehicle occupants are protected.

In addition, the traffic officers will be performing highway criminal interdictions, aggressive driver interdictions, laser activities, and saturation patrols. For more information, contact Sgt. Sylvan Rangamar at 664-9084-6.

Chacha Oceanview open house today

This is to inform the general public, student, parents and guardians that Chacha Oceanview Junior High School will be holding an Open House night today, Sept. 17, 2004 from 4:30 to 6:30pm for the distribution of our first quarter progress reports. This is an opportunity for all concerned stakeholders to speak with the teachers of your child/children about his/her progress in the classroom. Please come and join us on this day.

NMC Talent Search to hold Open House

The Northern Marianas College, Educational Talent Search Program is inviting all its participants, parents and guardians to its Open House on Sept. 20, 2004, Monday, from 6pm to 7pm, in Building "S" at the Northern Marianas College campus.

Interpreters needed

The Emergency Operations Center is seeking volunteer interpreters to assist individuals seeking typhoon assistance at the Disaster Recovery Centers. Interpreters for Chinese, Korean, Tagalog and Japanese are needed. Hours are flexible. To volunteer, call Juan T. Camacho at the Emergency Management Office at 322-8001/2.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2004				
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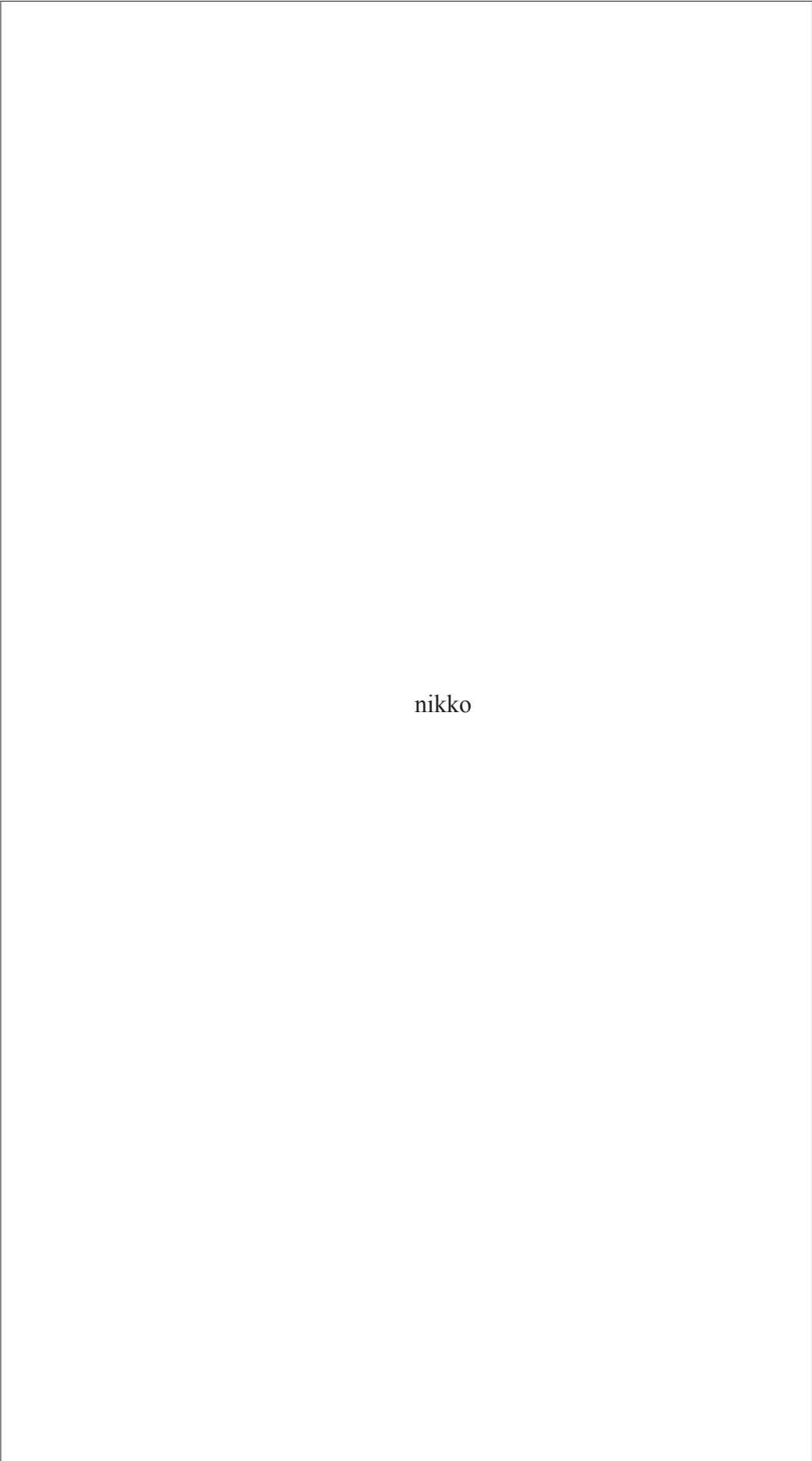
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Saipan garment factory sued for discrimination

HONOLULU (AP)—A Saipan-based garment factory that makes clothing for several American retailers and other companies was sued by the U.S. government for allegedly discriminating against employees based on their nationality.

Sako Corp. failed to renew its employment contracts with long-standing Filipino, Thai and Bangladeshi garment workers and hired Chinese workers in their place, according to the lawsuit filed by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Company officials did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment.

The EEOC’s Honolulu office found about 100 workers lost their jobs to younger and less experienced workers from China, most of whom were women in their late teens to early 20s, said Wilfredo Tungol, an EEOC trial attorney in Honolulu.

“It doesn’t make sense to replace an experienced sewer for someone who is inexperienced and in some cases doesn’t really know how to sew,” he said. “In some cases, they had to train these new workers.”

Sako cited business reasons for the change.

Tungol said the reason the company hired only Chinese employees will come forward as the case proceeds.

“We think there’s a hidden agenda by the corporation,” he said. “That’s all I can say about it.”

Most of the former employees were paid \$3.15 per hour, 10 cents above the minimum wage of \$3.05 per hour.

Saipan is the capital of the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, which is self-governing and sets its own minimum wage and immigration laws. The majority of people in the commonwealth are non-citizen workers and are employed in the garment industry.

“In view of the important role of the immigrant workers in the CNMI and the U.S., it is critical that we enforce the federal law,” EEOC district director Joan Ehrlich said in a statement. “Employment opportunity should (be) based on merit and experience, not nation of origin.”

It was the third EEOC lawsuit filed against Sako in recent years. The earlier lawsuits were for alleged pregnancy discrimination and retaliation. Both were settled in 2000 with the company agreeing to training programs to be monitored by the EEOC for three years, a term which ended before the latest alleged violations.

Sako was also one of several Saipan garment factories and major clothing retailers sued by garment workers and several advocacy groups. The settlement in 2003 created a \$20 million fund to pay back wages to 30,000 workers and developed an independent monitoring system to ensure compliance with strict labor standards.

The Northern Mariana Islands, with a population of 51,000, is located about 3,800 miles southwest of Hawaii.

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+red

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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Pacific Islands News Association

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The price gouging stupor

Stupor Typhoon Chaba blew a bit of email from Saipan Tribune readers into my computer, and thus we confront, yet again, the whole specter of the government potentially over-ruling the free market and putting the kibosh on "price gouging" in the wake of such disasters. I've heard arguments about this on Saipan, and on Guam, and in Florida, the latter of which is where I saw my first hurricane when I was stationed there in 1985. I've changed over the years. The price gouging arguments haven't. Stupors and typhoons seem about the same, too.

If I didn't like you, I'd insult your intelligence and mention all the obvious things you'd expect to hear out of my eternal flapping yap-per about the free market, and about how government price controls are merely the road to shortages, and about all the rest of it. But you probably know that already, since you have that keenly intuitive grasp of economics that says to you, "price controls will merely reduce the incentive for merchants to carry adequate supplies before the next Stupor Typhoon, since they will not be able to set their prices in accordance with market conditions." See? Price controls and shortages go together like Spam and Bud Lite.

So why would otherwise rational people all over the globe turn into rabid, beady-eyed little socialists when the post-disaster price gouging issue comes up? OK, I'll admit that most people in the world ARE beady-eyed little socialists, which is why there's so much poverty out there. But even reasonable and worthy people see some legitimacy in the government essentially declaring martial law in commerce after a typhoon by outlawing "price gouging."

I don't think price "gouging" should be illegal, but I'm not saying that it is ethical, either. The specter violates most people's notion of fair play, of a sense of community and social responsibility after disaster strikes. I think most (not all, but most) merchants would not price "gouge" at all, even if they could get away with it.

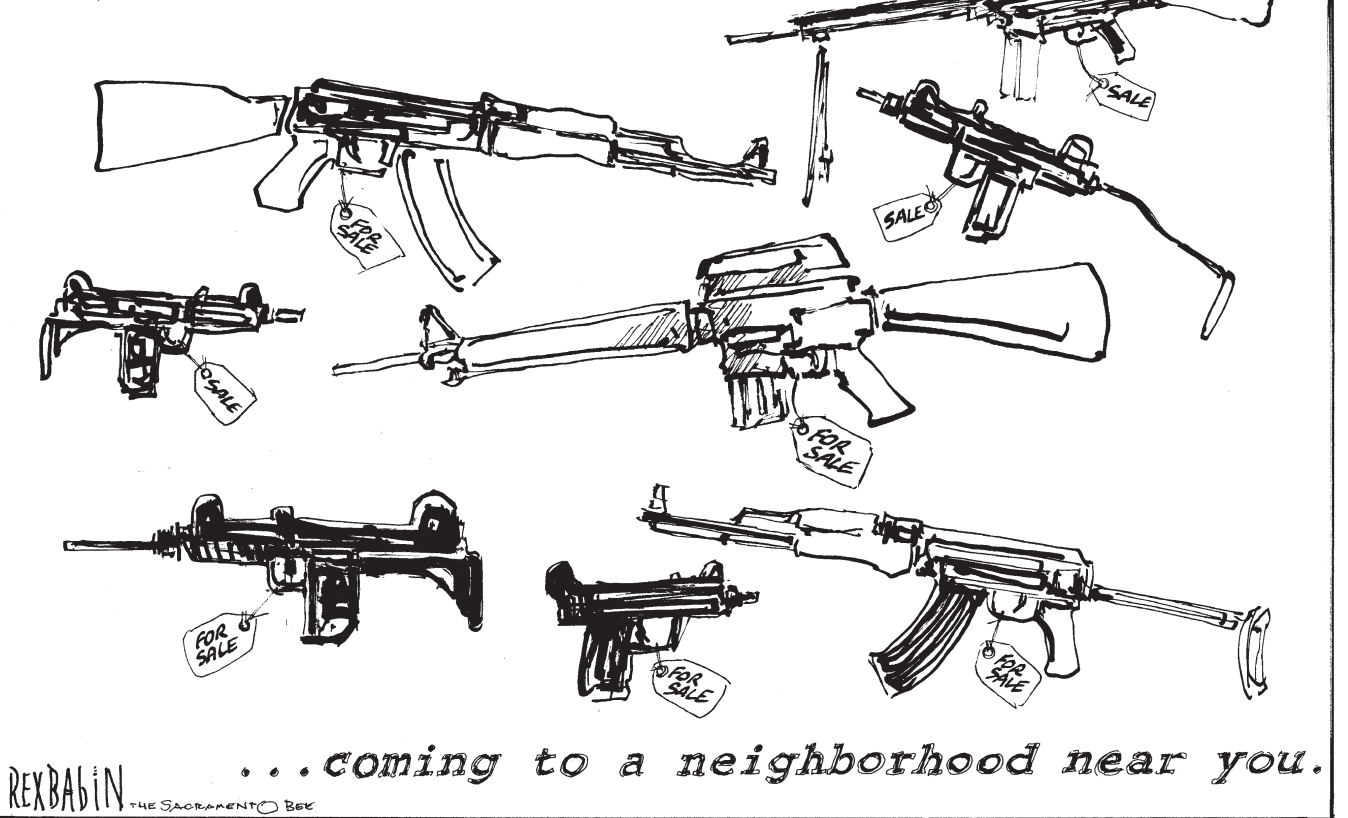
Indeed, there is a difference between profit incentive and greed. I don't like greedy people. I won't deal with them. Greed is a sin. But that doesn't make profit a sin. Greed and profit are two different things.

So the issue is whether or not greed should be outlawed. Heck, I'm all for that, if we could magically legislate morality and drive all the scumbags of the world into a big prison, I'd be the first to cheer the process. But every time some strong man offers this magic with a fist-full of answers, we find that the tyranny of government controls is worse than the tyranny of mercantile greed.

Meanwhile, we have to confront the fact that most people really don't understand how free markets work. They operate on an emotional level, and when they're distressed after a typhoon and see, say, a \$20 piece of lumber going for \$40, well, how do you expect them to react? People carry millions of unwritten assumptions in their heads about how much stuff costs and, hence, how much it is "worth." That's only human, can you really fault everyone for that all the time? If you do fault them, then answer my follow-up question: How would you react if your doctor upped his fee to see you because he knew you were so sick you'd pay anything for some help?

Says me: Sometimes "fair is fair," and that's all there is to it. But outlaw price gouging? No, because when we try to make simple decrees to confront the complexities of free markets, we usually make more problems than we solve. Let merchants set their own prices, rain or shine. And let the community decide for itself who is worthy of its long term trust and good will.

weapons of mass destruction...



Letters to the Editor

'I've walked in your shoes'

Ms. Shirlynn Perez claims that she and others are trying to correct the lack of clarity in Covenant Article III. My job requires that I refer to Covenant Article III on a daily basis, sometimes dozens of times a day. The Article, and its subsections, is crystal clear. The over 80 renounces became U.S. citizens, just as we did, on Nov. 4, 1986, based on Article III. So do not try to confuse the issue.

The lack of clarity here is the applicability of Covenant Article 501(a) as written by Judge Noonan—the application of the 14th Amendment in the Northern Mariana Islands at a period before the termination of the UN Trusteeship. Yes, people thought that the Trusteeship would end on Jan. 8, 1978. It did not. That is the 11-year difference that has caught many people, you and your co-plaintiffs and many others who are both NMI descents and were actually born here, in your predicament. But, for the 11 years that we had to wait, we never claimed we were stateless. You and your friends do, voluntarily.

My heart goes out to many of those like yourself because you

have no other place to call home. You were born and raised here and, yes, you rightfully should call the CNMI home. But not over Judge Noonan's flawed decision. You should get your citizenship through the private bill that is proposed for introduction in the U.S. Congress.

And, yes, I have walked in your shoes. I did so even while I was serving my country as the youngest member ever of the Legislature (so far), as the first person from the CNMI to be employed by a U.S. senator and as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces. I was not entitled to many rights others had, simply because Covenant Article III was not then effective and I was yet to become a U.S. citizen. But I never cried foul, I waited and persisted. You should, as you seem to be doing, also wait and persist.

Gregorio C. Sablan
Garapan, Saipan

SVES: Flash flood not a funny number

It came without any warning. The early morning sun was out and about. I even tried teaching my class to sing the oldie but goodie "Blue Skies" song. But shortly before noon Wednesday, Sept. 15, it rained and kept raining for a good hour. In no time, the flash flood swept in. It was déjà vu Tingting, Chaba, Songda all over again.

The build up was quite ominous. A lightning flash accompanied by a resounding thunder intrusively clapped into the 1pm class hour, enough to elicit a spine tingling scream from one of the girls. Then the power went off and a thunderous applause from the students filled the classroom. Approvingly, they seem to have sensed an imminent disruption of classes. But the power outage was short-lived, restored within the half-hour. However, the rain kept pouring.

Rain had also been coming down the slopes uphill toward the mid-island ridge, and in no time, the water runoff congregated, as it normally does, right on the concave of the SVES main gate. The accumulated washout shoots across the parking lot and turns into raging rapids into the fifth grade classrooms, and into an Olympic size swimming pool on the school quad, before it silts the offices of the Principal and Vice-Principal, conveniently positioned on the pathway of the rampaging waters. Cascading down the pathway to the lower grade classrooms, this chronic flow of flash flooding waters poses an incredible threat to life and limb to the young children. Teachers and staff, maintenance crew and administrators have to divert traffic away from crossing any raging waters lest pedestrians lose their balance on the slippery pathways, or worse, an exposed electrical line shoots live current skimming through the waters.

A frantic call was made to one of the government executive of-

fices on Capitol Hill for an official to come and witness the ongoing flooding. Came this incredulous reply, "How could it be flooding in San Vicente when we are having bright sunshine on Capital Hill?" So, OK, someone at the other end tried to be capriciously comical. But flash flooding is not a funny number to the children, parents, teachers, staff and administrators at San Vicente Elementary School.

The scheduled staff meeting shot, SVES principal Janet Vil-lagomez remained composed even as she stood with rolled up pant sleeves on above ankle-deep water. Though visibly dismayed once again, specially after sandbagging strategic locations that was hoped to divert as well as stem water flow from critical areas, she obviously was dreading the thought of the classrooms to be dried up and cleaned out again. Vice principal James Rayphand, who normally heads the cleanup crew, may very well have decided to forego shaving until the drainage issue within and around San Vicente is structurally dealt with.

Water had not quite receded when the school buses came in but the pedestrian traffic was orchestrated well enough to have avoided any serious mishaps. Ironically, two sixth graders were holding their clipboard for parents' signatures to a plea to the CNMI Legislature for immediate assistance to the chronic flooding at SVES. Without a doubt, they will be doubling their efforts in the morning.

Meanwhile, out came push broom and the water hose.

Jaime R. Vergara
SVES

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions and articles, columns, editorial, or topical may be sent to the public editor. To be published, the editor must include the name, address, and contact information of the contributor. Letters that are critical and/or include abuse or insults, and personal attacks, will not be published. Contributors will be notified if their article is not published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish contributions or any part thereof in whole or in part, and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Subscribers may also receive email and other digital content. Copyright 2004 Saipan Tribune. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher.

Letters to the Editor**Azmar's worst nightmare**

In response to Ken Moore and his lawyer Jeff Finley, who both wrote letters to the local papers blasting PaganWatch, I would like to offer them this challenge: Go to <http://www.chamorro.com/paganwatch> and find a false document.

On the PaganWatch website you'll find every news article and letter to the editor that we come across via daily searches. You'll also find copies of permits, permit requests, marketing materials, photos, letters, and copies of email correspondence. Every item is genuine. Nothing forged, altered or edited in any way.

It doesn't matter whether it's pro-Azmar or anti-Azmar, if it has to do with the mining controversy you'll find it there.

Yes, freedom of speech is a wonderful privilege and is not to be taken for granted. That is why every statement and every fact that has come from PaganWatch is backed up by documents that were gathered by concerned citizens and made available so that the public and the decision-makers can have all the facts possible.

Despite Ken Moore's interesting portrayal of PaganWatch as the shady tool of just two people, PaganWatch is in reality a group of concerned citizens who gather and share information with the public and CNMI decision-makers regarding the Northern Islands. Our membership is made up of people from the CNMI, Guam, Hawaii, the U.S. mainland and everywhere that Chamorros, Refaluwasch and true friends of the islands can be found. We all share a genuine love for the land and people of the Northern Islands and we work hard to protect our islands.

Again, I urge Ken Moore and his supporters to try to find a forged document on the PaganWatch web site. But hold on to your seats, because you might not like what you find there. For instance, you'll find:

- Ken Moore's email to Cinta Kaipat (whom he accuses of never having communicated with him), in which he explained how he planned to use money belonging to a WWII Museum non-profit corporation to pay for his pozzolan mining project.

- A *Saipan Tribune* story with a picture of Cinta Kaipat talking with Ken Moore.

- Ken Moore's Aug. 1, 2003 email to Don Farrell (with Cinta Kaipat copied in), a profanity-filled tirade in which he refers to a CNMI congressman as a "big ass snorting and belching pig," to the MPLA board as "[at best] individuals who've run a franchise operation like Wendy's or McDonalds."

- Azmar's Marketing Brochure that lifts its technical information from another website, and that freely uses the test results of Construction Technologies Laboratories—results that, according to the lab technician who did the work, Ken Moore was not authorized to use because he didn't pay the \$1000 bill for the test.

- The Azmar/MPLA Deal Calculator, developed by PaganWatch and based on Azmar's permit terms and CNMI tax laws, that demonstrates that the deal is EXTREMELY one-sided in favor of Ken Moore and would be a major exploitation of the Marianas Public Land Trust.

- Azmar's own financial projections that projects a three-year \$40.5 million profit for Ken Moore (in addition to sharing a \$600,000 salary with one other officer), followed by \$47.2 million per year thereafter, while the CNMI would get only \$18.7 million for three years and then \$9.7 million per year. Further there are few funds for local jobs and no plans for environmental damage mitigation—no funds for reforestation, no environmental studies, no marine biologists, no agriculturalists, no one to monitor anything.

- A *Saipan Tribune* story quoting Coastal Resources Management's Regulatory Board, made up of officials from CRM, the Division of Environmental Quality, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Office, Department of Public Works, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and Department of Commerce, as saying they were never contacted by Azmar for a major

siting permit, which entails a study that will determine the impact of its proposed pozzolan mining on the environment, which means that Azmar has no environmental study.

- News reports of the signature campaign that yielded nearly 600 signatures in a day and a half, including most of the Northern Islands residents, that brought to Senate President Adriano's desk the petition asking the Senate to approve the House of Representatives Act to study the Pagan mining potential before issuing any permits, and the subsequent stories of how he ignored the petition, shelved the House Act, and then was quoted as saying he's throwing it in the trash.

You'll also find lots of pictures and information on how pozzolan is mined and what irresponsible and incompetent mining can do to the environment—the kind of mining an inexperienced company with no environmental impact interest can do.

What you won't find on PaganWatch is any evidence of Azmar mining experience, any detailed operating plan, a detailed business plan, a realistic timeline to get through all the permits and permissions required, or any evidence of actual funds set aside in advance to make good on the promises made to the Northern Islands residents.

Provide us with those documents Mr. Moore, and they will be published on the front page of PaganWatch.

Despite what Ken Moore and his supporters say, PaganWatch is of the people, by the people and for the people. We find the truth, tell the truth and we back it with evidence. This is why Ken Moore and his attorney's attempts to intimidate us will not work.

So go ahead Ken Moore and supporters, accept the challenge. Please. Visit <http://www.chamorro.com/paganwatch> and find a false document...

Peter J. Pangelinan Perez

PaganWatch

Time to recall

I have been intimately following the Pagan mining issue with a sense of urgency and deep concern for our islands to the north that our ancestors once freely journeyed to in fast, magnificent, flying *proas* of the time. I could only imagine the laughter and shouts of joy from the children aboard those fast-sailing handcrafted vessels as the islands majestically appeared before their curious eyes.

Last Sunday, during the 20th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament, I piloted my fishing vessel Nanami II heading north, bearing 000 degrees.

After several hours of trolling, Farallon de Mendinilla, a low-lying island, appeared at the starboard bow at 030 degrees. In the distance directly north, the two towers of Anatahan stood beckoning us forward. It was very hard to resist the island calling, like a grandmother with gentle and kind open arms beckoning a child to come forth and be comforted. Nevertheless, I saw the other half of the island appeared white and bare like a quarry or wasteland.

The large white, bare and desert-like part of the beautiful low-lying island is the result of years of bombing exercises conducted by our naval, air and marine forces without anything being extracted—taken away as would be done in mining. I thought to myself, if the beautiful small island of Pagan were mined it certainly would appear devastated. Of course, it could be replanted successfully but only with proper and timely management and control measures overseen by experts and years to heal.

There were so much being exchanged between the proponents and opponents of Azmar that I find it hard to hold back the avalanche of evidence I have carefully gathered for quite sometime now.

Strategically speaking, it would be to the proponent's advantage to cause division and execute fierce and overwhelming tactics to defeat opponents swiftly and with the least losses. Even sweeter in victory is when we turn the natives against each other and confuse the facts with the natives' assistance. How destructive it is when our own people turn against us for a small gain. How bitter it is when "outsider opportunists, aided and abetted by local agents, both blinded by the prospect of big profits and eager to convince public servants and their constituents of the benefits for the common good," as Dr. Vicente M. Diaz so eloquently wrote.

To add insult to injury, proponents of strip-mining on Pagan accuse our people as being "emotional and unreasonable." It is a very convenient and desperate defensive move. I urge our people, Chamorro and Refaluwasch, especially those gifted and the likes of Dr. Vicente M. Diaz, to arm yourself with pen and paper and symbolically poke into the eyes of many unwilling to discern the machination and power of deception.

A very special thank you to Speaker Benigno R. Fitial and the members of the leadership, including the minority whip, for unanimously passing the lower house's legislation that is now gathering

dust in the Senate to allow for an assessment, initial studies to be conducted before any mining is done simply to discover and prevent potential adverse effects on Pagan and hopefully bring the most benefits to the people.

We need to take a stand and not yield to intimidation. This is easily achieved by arming ourselves with facts, the truth. Ken Moore spoke about the truth and that is exactly what he is going receive.

Let the facts speak. We support mining. Outsider opportunists with the help of our own local people created many obstacles themselves. The difficulties ahead are of their own making. I couldn't help but think of a quote from the movie Cold Mountain: "They created the weather. Stood in the rain and complained. It's raining!"

The present and future generations of NMI descents would know that we did not succumb to threats and intimidations by Azmar's lawyers and supporters.

We will continue to exercise our First Amendment rights to express our views and discoveries based on facts, reputable evidences and witnesses. I admire your tenacity Kenneth Moore. Feel free to contact me through Speaker Benigno Fitial's office. You can leave your number or email address.

I look forward to hearing from you directly.

Ray Mafnas

Matansa

'There must be a mistake'

I know MPLA board member Nick Nekai. I know him to be an honorable man who stands up for what he believes in. Indeed, he stood up in my backyard repeatedly and spoke highly of my character, having read the story of my 27-year quest to fulfill the vow I made as a kid to my mom to find out how and where her brother "disappeared" during World War II (I had in 1999). I also know that Mr. Nekai stood up at the MPLA board meeting on Aug. 17 and stated for the record that the permit Azmar International was to obtain would be "null and void in 60 days" if we were unable to meet the additional requirements. I can't

understand how he can stand up now, according to your article, and say that there will be no conditional permit issued in the interim and "even when Azmar submits all the requirements, we will not automatically give them a permit." What? I can't believe Nick had spoken highly of my character to cover up what he thinks of my intellect. It is beyond anything rational to believe that Azmar International or any other legitimate company should be forced to turn over its list of clients and tens of millions of dollars only for the chance of obtaining a permit. A permit allowing it to spend \$15 million to take the risk of excavating a product

from a remote island that the global market is willing to try but does not necessarily need? No, this can't be the Nick Nekai that I know. As I stated to you in my previous correspondence, there must be a mistake somewhere along line.

Can you request a copy of, or the opportunity to hear the Aug. 17 MPLA board meeting recording to find out what's going on?

Kenneth Moore

Azmar International

Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Ex-lawmaker questions CHC contract awarding

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Former congressman Stanley Torres is questioning the awarding of a \$378,000 contract by the Department of Health to a private contractor, Solid Builders.

"It's very suspicious," said Torres, citing that Solid Builders is owned by businessman Ben Fejeran, "a major campaign donor" to Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

"He [Fejeran] is also a partymate.

It's so disappointing that the government forces other people to follow regulations and here we're discovering a sweetheart deal. There's a strong indication that the contract is handpicked," Torres said.

Sources said DPH received three other proposals from other vendors: Maeda Pacific, RNV, and GPPC.

Maeda Pacific submitted the lowest price of \$229,000 but it was disqualified for lack of requirements. GPPC placed the highest bid at \$600,000.

Sources said that Solid Builders submitted its proposal last and it was only "\$20,000 more than what was submitted by RNV."

In an Aug. 23, 2004 letter to Procurement and Supply director Herman S. Sablan, DPH Secretary James U. Hofschneider said that the Department of Public Works requested quotations from the vendors "and Solid Builders Inc. is the lowest responsive vendor."

In an Aug. 27 letter to Hofschneider, Sablan expressed concern over Solid

Builder's ability to obtain payment and performance bond.

"I request that this contractor not be allowed to sign the contract before providing us with a letter of commitment from a bonding company willing to insure this project," he said.

When reached, Fejeran said that P&S' concern had been addressed.

"There's nothing controversial here. We've fully complied with the rules. We're ready to do the project," said Fejeran.

He lamented that critics seemed to have prejudged him only because he is closely associated with the administration.

The architectural and engineering contract amounting to \$378,264 is for the repair of the roof, siding, gutter, and spillway of the MSO and Procurement and Supply building of the Commonwealth Health Center.

The project is fully funded under the Centers for Disease Control and HRSA Bioterrorism cooperative agreement.

Verdict on human smuggling case up

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

A federal jury is expected to hand down its verdict today on the alleged attempt to smuggle Chinese nationals to Guam this year by defendants Edward Mendiola Fleming and Huang Zhong.

In his closing argument yesterday, the prosecution led by assistant U.S. attorney Jamie Bowers said testimonial evidence clearly showed that the defendants were guilty of two counts of criminal acts as charged: conspiracy to smuggle aliens and attempted alien smuggling for financial gain.

Bowers said that the "attempt" to bring aliens to the U.S. through an unauthorized place of entry took place the moment the group's boat left the Tinian dock on April 5, 2004.

"An attempt is a try, an effort to get something done. The attempt was made when they left Tinian. Now because of Mother Nature (the rough seas), they failed," said Bowers.

The lawyer also noted that a conspiracy was established based on the testimonies of witnesses.

"A conspiracy can have a complicated connotation but it is merely an agreement between two or more people to commit a crime," he said.

Bowers said it was established that the group, led by the defendants, had a plan to bring aliens to Guam. He said that based on the testimony of Conrad Iba, Fleming contacted him to execute the plan. Fleming allegedly offered Iba

\$1,000 to help bring the people to Guam.

Iba said he helped prepare for the trip but did not join them because it was too risky and it was illegal. Fleming allegedly said that he himself would get \$1,000 per person.

The boat, piloted by Fleming, carried four Chinese nationals, including Huang.

Bowers cited that a conspiracy between the defendants as well as between Fleming and another Chinese called "Jesie" was shown through telephone call records obtained by the prosecution.

He said that supplies like fuel, food, and betel nuts were purchased for the alleged trip to Guam.

Further, Bowers said that the four Chinese nationals had slept at Fleming's apartment on Tinian on the eve of the trip.

"They were arranging the trip. They bought supplies. Everybody knew that they're going to Guam," he said.

The lawyer said it does not matter whether the group made it to Guam or not. The issue, he said, is that there was an attempt and there was a conspiracy to commit an unlawful act.

Bowers further noted that the two female passengers had earlier pleaded guilty to the crime. The ladies allegedly paid \$1,500 as down payment to Fleming. Bowers said both defendants are equally responsible for the crime.

Attorney Perry Inos, who represents Huang, insisted that there was no evidence that would prove that the defendants were going to Guam.

Smuggling, he said, means going

into the U.S. at a place other than the designated port of entry. "So we ask ourselves, are there [pieces of] evidence that rise to a level beyond reasonable doubt? Did they try to go to Guam? Did the government tell you where in Guam they're going?"

Inos said the guilty plea agreements entered into by the two boat passengers were their own guilt.

Besides, he said the two ladies were never told while they were on Rota that they would go to Guam. He said only when they arrived and were arrested on Saipan did the ladies "change their story."

"Those two ladies were afraid. They changed their story. Now, did they say where in Guam they would land? No, because they're not going to Guam," said Inos.

The defendants pleaded not guilty to the crime, saying it was only a fishing trip. The defense said the group had in fact called 911 when the boat encountered rough sea conditions and allegedly ran out of gas.

According to the indictment, between March and April 5, 2004, Fleming and Huang and their co-conspirators recruited Chinese workers to pay them cash to travel by boat from Tinian to Guam.

During the trip, the boat got lost in rough seas, allegedly forcing Fleming to call 911 through a cellular phone for navigational assistance. The group aborted the alleged Guam trip and sailed to nearby Rota instead.

permit to mine pozzolan on the island.

Moore, however, denied receiving any notification from the MPLA on any permit.

"We have not received any document that could be described in any way as a permit, nor have our telephone calls to MPLA's [acting commissioner] Frankie Eliptico or [board chair] Ana Demapan-Castro been

returned, and none of our written communications have been answered to date since June 15, 2004," Moore said.

"We have, however, been bombarded with rumors. One such rumor is that we will be receiving from MPLA a list of further conditions to be met, nothing more. That alone without a permit is unacceptable to us," he said.

promotional materials—from posters, general information on the destination, to travel agents' brochures, and MVA's website www.mymarianas.com.

"On the MVA's direction to brand our destination as a new and exciting vacation place, we want to put emphasis on the region, Marianas, which incorporates all three islands, linked by airports and seaports," she told Tudela in a letter.

The "See My Marianas Campaign" aims to create a greater awareness of the activities that one can experienced in the Northern Marianas, Benavente said.

The campaign will focus on (1) sports tourism, (2) gourmet cuisine and entertainment, and (3) health/wellness and spa. It will cover sports tourism from golfing to swimming, gourmet cuisine and entertainment to include

fine dining and annual fiestas, and health/wellness and spa, through walking and biking.

In his letter, Tudela also said the term "Marianas" holds no special ring.

"[It does not generate] interest, much less excite the passion on travelers in core travel markets of Japan, Korea, and Greater China, except possibly in Spain or other countries familiar with the former matriarch Queen Mariana of Spain, who would jump at the first opportunity to visit and experience Spain's vintage colonial outpost in the Pacific," the mayor said.

He expressed doubt, however, that the word's historical ring and significance to the Spanish people, particularly historians, may hold much significance among Asian travelers.

CUC

From Page 1

sued last April 13. CUC, however, has failed to address the issues as of Aug. 26.

The public auditor's report also showed that CUC posted the second highest number of delinquent audit recommendations. The utility corporation followed the Department of Finance, with 11 delinquent recommendations.

"It is not unusual for Finance to have the most number of outstanding recommendations because its responsibilities extend government-wide," noted public auditor Mike Sablan.

While most other agencies have reduced or eliminated their delinquencies, CUC's delinquent recommendations increased from four by the end of 2002, to eight by the end of 2003.

CUC chair Francisco Q. Guerrero said he has yet to see a copy of OPA's tracking report, but he would check with the management on the current status of each recommendation.

Two of the recommendations, which date way back in August 1995, were made in an audit of advances to the former executive director.

OPA has directed CUC to establish and implement policies on expenses for official representation, entertainment, and other similar expenses. CUC was also told to require the comptroller to develop procedures on

purchases requiring cash payment, wire transfer, and allowability of cash purchases for reimbursement.

Another two recommendations pertain to the OPA's August 2002 audit of CUC's small purchases from Oct. 1, 1999 through March 31, 2001. Again, Babauta said the management had acted on the recommendations and requested the board for action.

In January 2003, OPA also issued an audit of CUC's personnel hiring from Oct. 1, 1999 through July 15, 2001. In that audit, OPA asked CUC to establish a comprehensive personnel rules and regulations, as well as CUC's own classification and compensation schedule.

Also in January 2003, the public auditor asked CUC in January 2003 to include promotion and salary increase justifications, and the various forms of premium pay it plans to use, as well as to conform to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act concerning computation of overtime. This came following an audit of CUC's release of premium pay, overtime, and salary increases from Oct. 1, 1999 through Sept. 30, 2001.

Last Oct. 17, CUC executive director Lorraine Babauta informed OPA that the proposed policies were completed and awaiting adoption by the CUC board of directors.

To date, OPA has yet to receive a copy of the promulgated or amended policies mentioned.

AZMAR

From Page 1

board granted Azmar a conditional approval, subject to the company's submission of certain requirements to prove its financial capability within a 60-day period. If Azmar meets the MPLA requirements, it may receive a two-year

MARIANAS

From Page 1

It extends much beyond the shores of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," Tudela said in a letter to MVA.

"Arguably, Guam may take umbrage at the implicit claim of the Marianas by MVA as an exclusive archipelago and domain of the island group of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota," he added. "We should not create an unnecessary ill feeling with our neighboring island to the south."

MVA managing director Vicky I. Benavente maintained that for years, the tourism agency has been promoting the NMI as Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in major travel markets abroad.

Benavente said the three islands are always included in all of MVA's

BILL

From Page 1

of an existing contract and after such contract expires.

This law allows nonresident workers up to 45 days after the expiration of his employment contract to seek new employment if the contract is not renewed.

It also allows nonresident workers to transfer from one employer to another and change job category, subject to certain requirements.

The code section incorporates amendments created by Public Law 12-11, also known as the Omnibus Labor and Business Reform Act of 2000, which took effect on Aug. 3, 2000.

"We do not believe that it is in the interest of the Commonwealth to stifle commerce by enacting restrictive laws, especially when our economy is in great need of revitalization," states the Act.

"The Legislature further finds that, although there is a need to protect jobs for our local residents, if there is no qualified local person to fill a business need, then the government should adopt policies to help business meet its staffing needs," it adds.

The Act also noted the Legislature's

recognition of the need to encourage new business development through little government intrusion.

Just last week, the lower chamber passed a bill that seeks to authorize the Public School System to establish a technical education program and convert the Marianas High School into a technical school to minimize the CNMI's dependence on nonresident workers.

The bill identifies \$25 of every initial application and renewal fees for non-resident workers' certificates among the project's source of funds. The House's Education Committee concluded that there is a need to integrate technical curriculum in public high schools to prepare students for higher education or immediate employment.

Last Thursday, the House also passed a bill that seeks to enhance the CNMI's data system on the availability of resident workers, partly proposing the conduct of surveys on future employment plans, skills and job preferences of graduating high schools students.

House Bill 14-228, also known as the Local Employment Assurance Act of 2004, wants to enhance the current system of registration, referral, and other employment services to assist potential resident workers in securing jobs.

Letter to the Editor

Primaries are an integral part of the electoral and democratic process

The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas has a formal government with a House and Senate that comprises the Legislature. In addition, there is a formal constitution in place which would be considered the supreme law of the CNMI.

The election process in the CNMI involves political parties, e.g., Covenant, Republican, Democrat, and Independent. Each of these respective parties generally goes through a “primary” subsequent to the election, which typically occurs approximately one year later in November.

According to the United Press International, “primaries are key to election day.” Moreover, primaries are held to make a determination as to which candidate for each specific party will have the illustrious right to vie for a political seat, e.g., president, governor, senator, and representative. Although incumbents are usually the candidate selected by parties to represent the party prior to an election, it should never be presumed that their status as an incumbent will automatically make them the chosen contender for the specific party prior to an election. A primary will allow the party to ascertain who should be the best possible candidate.

The right of other prospective candidates to take on an incumbent during a primary is an integral part of the democratic process. And because specific parties are always looking for the most effective and competent candidate, they may promote another individual especially if an incumbent candidate has demonstrated that he or she has not made the best decisions for the electorate and provided leadership lacking in integrity, values, and vision.

WTOP describes primary elections to be the “first step” in the election process. In a primary, the voters registered with each of the major political parties select their party’s representative, or nominee, to the general election.

The recent proclamation of Sen. Pete Reyes, a Republican, to the media asserting that “I feel the Republican Party should have a primary; they should adhere to the democratic system of government and allow others to run for the gubernatorial post,” is completely germane and legitimate simply because to not conduct a “primary” prior to the election next November would be in direct defiance of the philosophy and democratic process which the CNMI presumably follows and respects.

An incumbent governor should never give the impression or insinuate that a primary should not be held prior to a gubernatorial election in the following year. To give the notion

that a primary should not take place would be akin to how elections are run under dictatorial or police states. The mentality of not allowing prospective candidates to effectively challenge an incumbent contradicts the entire democratic process and should never be condoned or allowed for a commonwealth that presumably supports and espouses democratic principles, as well as the democratic election process, unequivocally and wholeheartedly.

It appears that Heinz Hofschneider, the House of Representative’s minority leader and former Speaker of the House for the 13th Legislature, has shown a serious interest in providing the leadership for the highest public office in the CNMI. He, as well as any other candidates who aspire to be the CNMI governor, should be allowed to compete in a primary and challenge the sitting incumbent, Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

No force (except perhaps a

Category 5 Typhoon) or individual can prevent a primary for Election Day from taking place. It will always be a part of the election process and should always be allowed to occur. If the governor of the CNMI wants to convince his Republican party members, as well as members representing the other parties in the Legislature and the electorate that he is an ardent supporter of the democratic process, then he should vigorously welcome a primary and enthusiastically lend support in allowing it to take place whenever primaries are scheduled to take place in the CNMI. If he does not welcome it, then it would be apparent what his philosophy is regarding the democratic process and should not be dismayed if the gubernatorial results in November 2005 for a second term are not favorable.

Dr. Jesus D. Camacho
Delano, California

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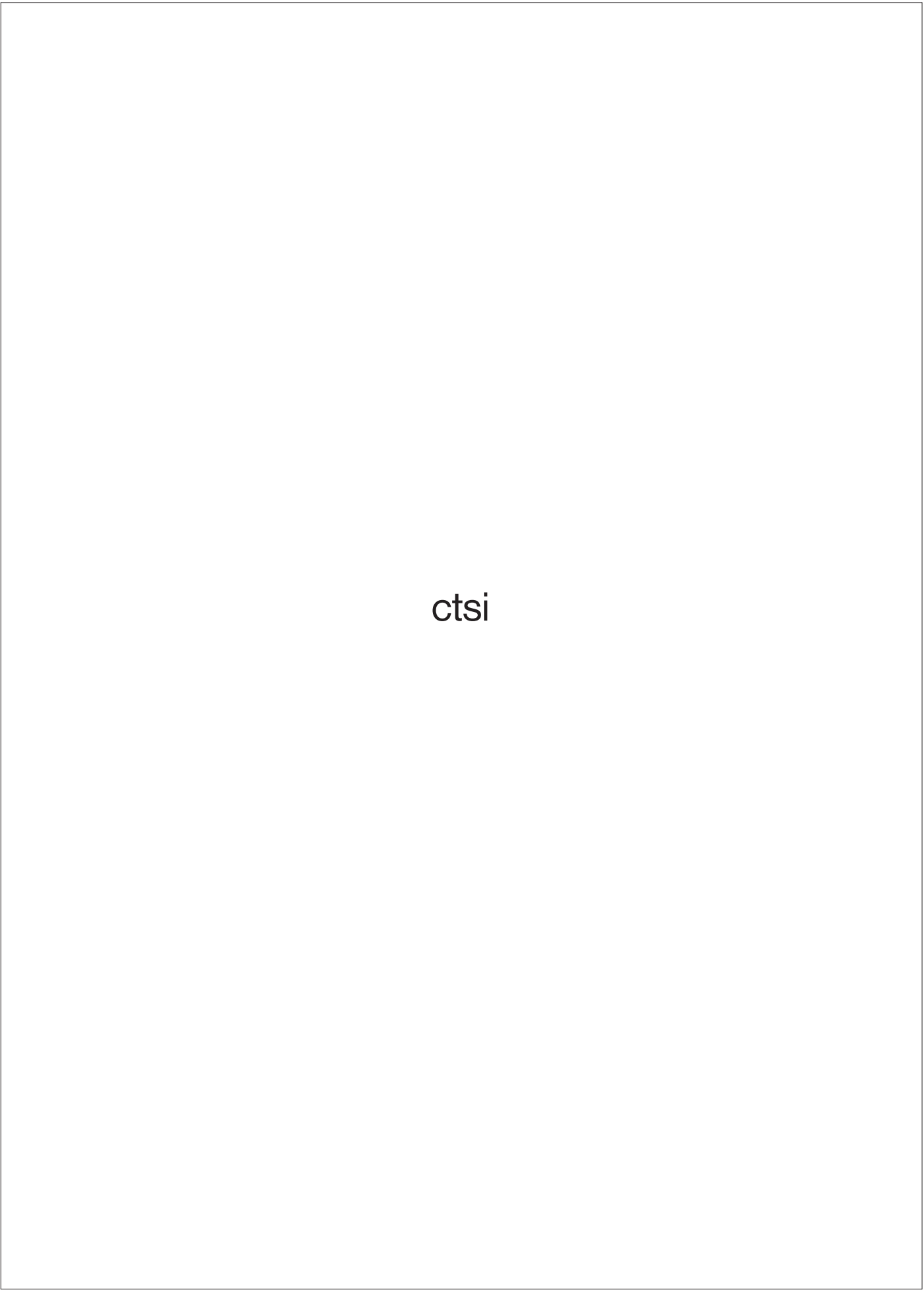
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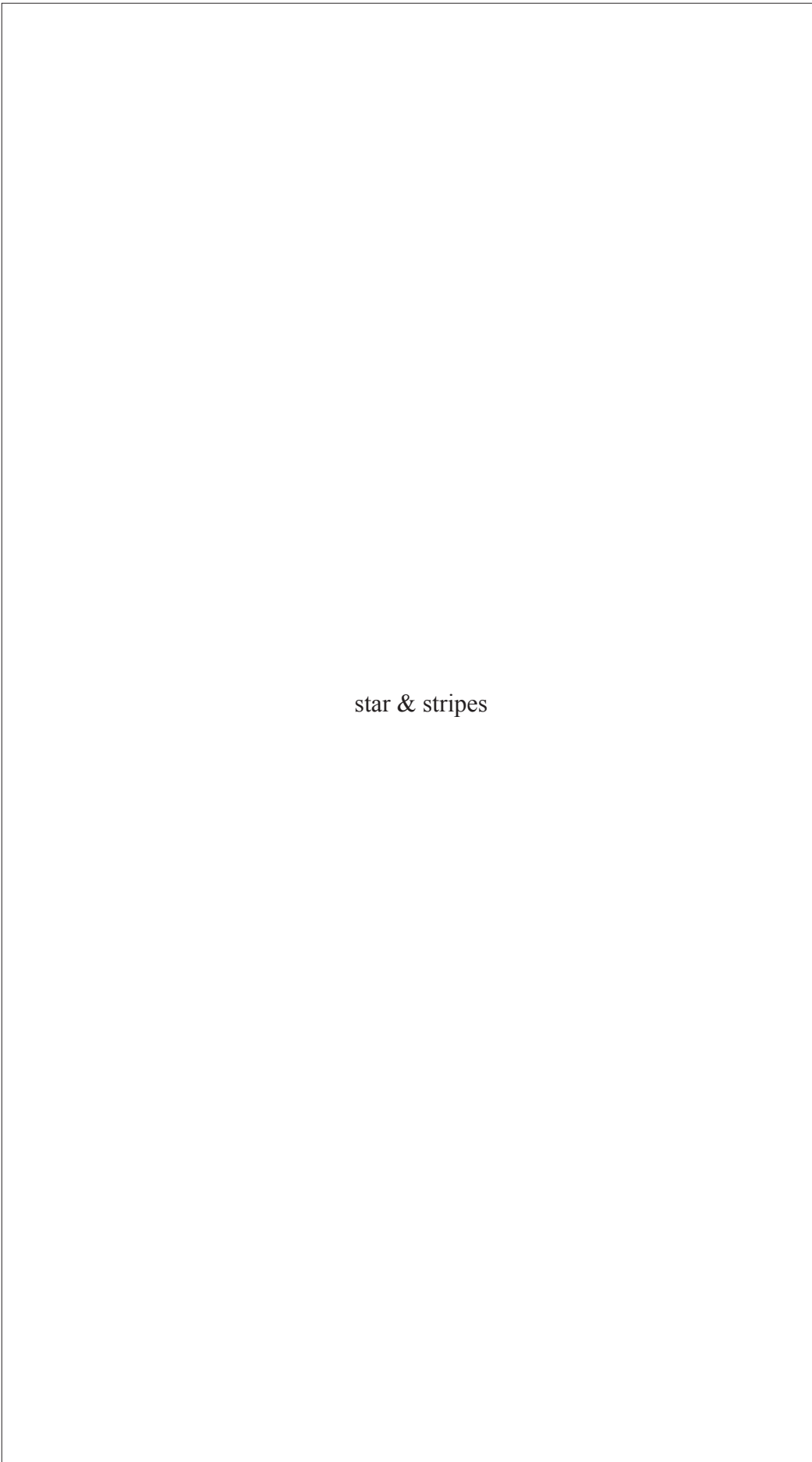
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Science & Technology

AT&T Wireless to offer phoneless messaging

In a detour from the cellular industry's rush toward tricked out smart phones, AT&T Wireless Services Inc. may introduce a device that can't be used for voice calls. Instead, it's designed specifically for e-mail, short text messages and other forms of wireless chat.

Plans for the "ogo," a clam-shell gadget with a full keyboard for thumb typing, were revealed in filings with the Federal Communications Commission by the manufacturer, Chi Mei Communication Systems Inc. of Taiwan. The device is also equipped with Bluetooth tech-

nology for short-range wireless connections with other devices.

The FCC filings included a copy of a user manual featuring the AT&T Wireless brand. The cell phone company, due to be acquired by Cingular Wireless later this year, declined to comment.

Aside from the BlackBerry and Goodlink e-mail devices carried by legions of white collar professionals, no other messaging-only devices are available from major wireless carriers in the United States.

The last real competitors for the BlackBerry, made by from Research In Motion Ltd., and

the Goodlink, from Good Technology Inc., were the Timeport and Talkabout keyboard devices, both of which Motorola Corp. stopped making more than two years ago.

While there are other wireless handhelds with keyboards—led by the Treo 600 from palmOne Inc. and the T-Mobile Sidekick made by Danger Inc.—they are designed to double as cell phones, as well as personal organizers, Web browsers, cameras, MP3 music players, video game players and even portable TVs.

Despite its popularity as an e-mail-only device, even

the BlackBerry is now being offered with phone and other capabilities.

That's because many people don't like to carry around multiple devices, so the market for all-in-one cell phones is expected to flourish in the coming years.

In 2004, smart phones are expected to account for less than 3 percent of all wireless handsets shipped, or about 17.6 million of an estimated 650 million, according to research firm IDC. The number is expected to nearly double next year to about 30 million, or 4.3 percent of an estimated 700 million shipments. (AP)

BYTES AND PIECES

Europe council looks to fight cybercrime

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP)—An international conference opened Wednesday amid warnings that companies, governments and individuals are increasingly vulnerable to Internet attacks by terrorists, hackers and others that rob them of privacy, money, and secrets.

The aim of the three-day Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg, France, is to get governments worldwide to accelerate ratification of the council's 2001 Cybercrime Convention, the first international treaty to combat Internet crimes.

The event brings together law enforcement officials and Internet users, including private companies. It underscores that while the Internet's unregulated nature is widely seen as a problem in law enforcement terms, governments are slow to jointly combat Internet crime.

Sony developing TVs that zoom in on image

TOKYO (AP)—Sony Corp. has developed a computer chip that allows viewers to zoom in on any part of a TV image, such as a favorite soccer player or an intruder on security-camera footage, while keeping the image sharp.

The huge electronics and entertainment giant said it was unclear when the zoom function would be available on TV sets, however.

In a demonstration Wednesday, Sony showed its "Digital Reality Creation Multifunction v2"—a technology that allows users to pan around the TV image and then zoom in. A knob on a box attached to the TV adjusts the amount of zoom.

Sony said the Digital Reality Creation chip doesn't zoom the usual way—by stretching horizontal and vertical scanning lines—but instead delivers clear zoomed images by digitally enhancing the signal to communicate gloss, depth and texture.

kfc
+red/blue

tribune saipan ice

Which is tougher: Digital camera or film camera?

By **ROB PEGORARO**
THE WASHINGTON POST

Q: I recently had a Pen-tax digital camera fail without suffering any obvious abuse. Are digital cameras inherently more fragile than film cameras?

A: I can tell you that the digital cameras I've

tried have been pretty sturdy, despite the abuse I've put them through. The worst such example was when I managed to drop a not-cheap Pentax on a tile floor from about waist-high last winter. The camera worked perfectly afterwards, with the only trace of the incident a fractionally wider gap between two metal pieces at the end that landed first.

In the abstract, I'd wager that digital and film cameras are equally vulnerable to damage, on account of both including a variety of small, delicate moving parts. In use, though, a digital camera has a better chance of breaking earlier--strictly because it will be taken more places and used more often than a larger, heavier film camera.

Q: Is it realistic to have Windows automatically update itself if I only have a dial-up connection?

A: Yes. Microsoft set up Windows XP's automatic update system to allow users to download a trickle of large files; the update software will fetch these in the background while you're online, using whatever band-

width you're not employing at any given moment.

When you disconnect, the download will pause; the next time you dial up, it will resume. This continues for as long as it's necessary to get the whole thing. The key thing is to not download the whole file all at once--just let Windows Update do the work for you.

To set up automatic updates,

go to the Start Menu and select Control Panel. Click on the Performance and Maintenance icon, then open the System control panel (if you're using the "classic view" option, you'll see the System icon in the main Control Panel window). Click the Automatic Updates tab and set Windows to download critical updates automatically.

THE COOLSCIENTIST Heisenberg vs FM radio

Regardless of its popularity, Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, based on a randomly-operating universe, has been rendered obsolete by our new understanding of pseudorandom resonant fields. The universe is not run by unexplained magic, but by precision field-flow patterns that can be deciphered just like an encrypted message by mapping their pattern sequences, as we have been learning. And make money doing it.

Heisenberg claimed that all attempts at understanding what happens deep inside things was futile because he imagined those activities to be random, while only an accumulation of field activities through statistical averaging could define the precision mathematics scientists and engineers use every day to predict how things work.

The problem is that things simply do not work that way. Take electromagnetic radiation (light, microwaves, radio waves and such). The electromagnetic field repeats itself every wavelength. An FM radio station at 100 Mhz has a wavelength about 3 meters long. Its activities can be precisely mapped, and shown to follow a sine curve that varies with the music being played.



By **JOHN N. HAIT**

According to Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, the energy isn't spread over each whole wavelength, but shows up all at once like a big spike at random times within each wavelength. Only over many wavelengths does one accumulate the statistical average of a sine curve.

The problem is that Heisenberg provided no mechanism for storing or averaging his random spikes through even one wavelength, let alone several. So, there simply doesn't

exist anything for generating the so-called statistics of quantum mechanics. Logically, to be truly random, all of his spikes must be truly independent, and detectable as individuals using high bandwidth equipment, which of course did not exist back in the 1920s when he came up with it.

An FM radio compares the length of each successive wavelength with the next. Those changes are then converted into sound. That's why high quality music is transmitted using FM.

If Uncertainty were true, the timing between spikes would vary randomly between zero and two wavelengths. This would be heard as a very loud hissing sound called "white noise," because the instantaneous wavelength (distance between successive spikes) would be continuously changing at random.

Note: I am not confusing macro effects with micro effects. The quantum limit of a radio wave is its wavelength. So anything smaller would be invisible according to Heisenberg. However, whatever happens there affects the macro result, and is thus measurable.

Each full wavelength requires energy. So no wavelength could begin before its spike-full of energy arrived. Therefore, in order to have a stable, quiet frequency, his spikes would have to show up precisely timed, exactly one wavelength apart. But then, they would no longer be random, would they?

If uncertainty were true, that FM station would splatter detectable energy from six meters all the way up to light! Such random spikes would also produce a very loud hissing noise in the FM detector rendering the music quite unpleasant to listen to.

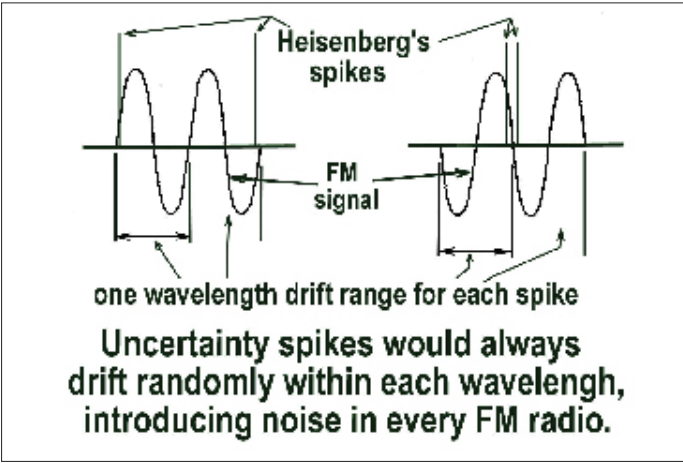
However, such direct evidence does support the Resonant Field Theory we have been learning about. So, just as an encoded FM signal can interact with an FM radio to produce high fidelity music, the encoding in the hydrogen atom can interact with the coding in the oxygen atom to produce water. It always gets it right, and it never forgets how to do it.

Thus, the prospect of atomic mapping opens the door for a considerable amount of research, and with it... research funding. Think about it whenever you hear a radio, because someone forgot to tell

Armstrong about the Uncertainty Principle. And as a result, he went ahead and invented FM radio anyway.

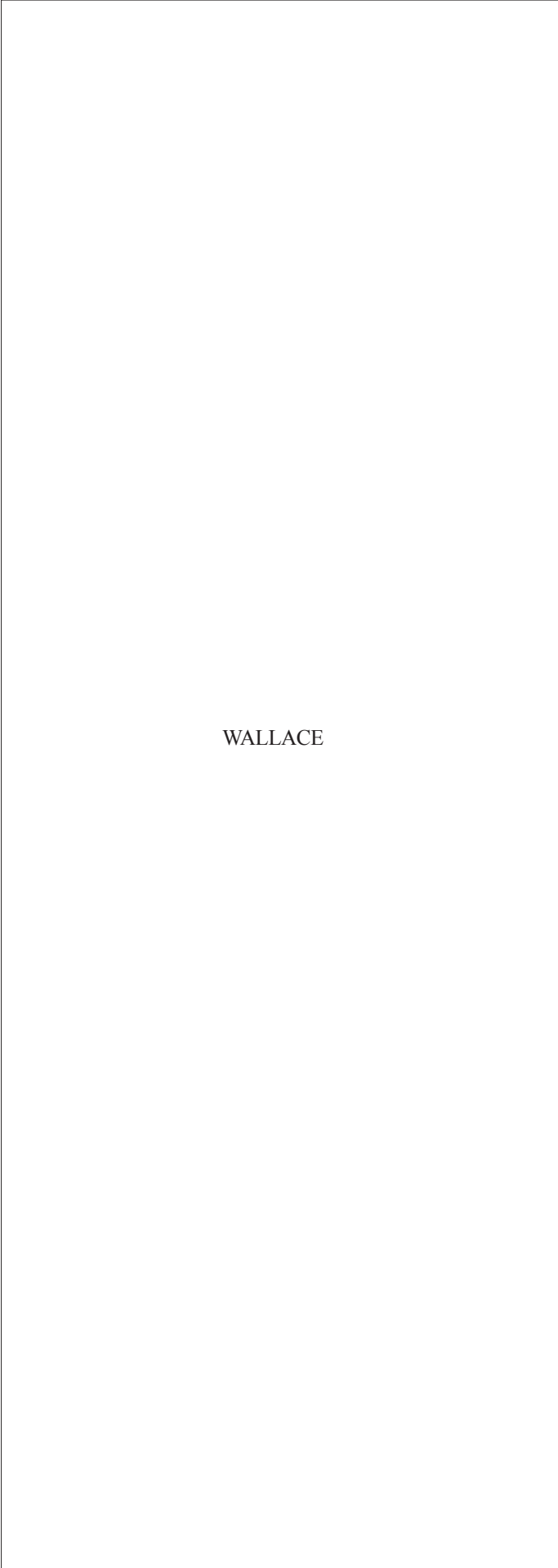
FM Radio 1, Heisenberg 0.

Hait has over 48 years experience as an engineer, and is the inventor of the Resonant Field Theory, photonic computing, advanced cryptography, practical energy conservation and alternative energy systems. He trained in industry, and has more than 46 patents and patents-applied-for. To ask questions, catch up on previous lessons, and get further information go to www.coolspace.info on the Internet.



boh

Life & Style



WALLACE

Madonna visits Israel

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)—Israel was abuzz with excitement Wednesday over the arrival of Madonna, its biggest celebrity visitor in years. The pop star came to the Holy Land on a spiritual quest, including visits to the graves of revered rabbinical sages.

Yet some were perplexed by the raunchy diva’s interest in the esoteric Jewish mysticism called cabala or Kabbalah, and rabbis said she had no business studying holy texts.

Raised a Roman Catholic, Madonna has adopted the Hebrew name Esther, wears a red thread on her wrist to ward off the evil eye and reportedly refuses to perform on the Jewish Sabbath. She also has incorporated Jewish symbols into some of her music videos, much to the consternation of religious leaders.

The organization hosting her in Israel ordered news reporters to wear white clothes and not to take notes when covering Madonna’s appearances during the New Year’s holiday, or Rosh Hashanah.

“This is entertainment, not Judaism,” said Uri Orbach, a popular talk-radio host and Orthodox Jew. “I think the general public will celebrate this, but the religious public will be indifferent.”

Madonna and friends flew into Tel Aviv Wednesday evening on a private jet and drove straight

to their downtown hotel in a convoy of limousines escorted by police. They did not speak to journalists, who were kept well away from the celebrities.

Fashion designer Donna Karan and Marla Maples, an ex-wife of Donald Trump, were other celebrities among some 2,000 students from 22 countries, according to the Kabbalah Center, sponsor of the trip. The Los Angeles-based center teaches Jewish mysticism as a spiritual tool regardless of religion.

Liora Goldenberg-Stern, a culture writer at the Maariv newspaper, said Madonna would be welcomed by Tel Aviv’s rich and famous, which has embraced cabala. “It’s a social thing, very trendy,” she said.

Madonna’s picture appeared on the Maariv back page, while the mass circulation Yediot Ahronot announced the visit on the front page.

Inside Yediot, a half-page spread included a photo of Madonna’s luxury hotel suite as well as the special holiday meal she would be eating, including salmon mousse, steak and chicken in mustard sauce and honey cake.

Madonna was not scheduled to perform during the five-day visit. Earlier this year, she canceled three Israel concerts, citing security concerns after Israel assassinated the leader of the Hamas militant group.

Israeli police spokesman Gil Kleiman said more than 1,000 officers were being deployed to protect the Kabbalah delegation, although no special precautions were being taken for Madonna, who has a private security detail.

On Sunday, Israeli Tourism Minister Gideon Ezra is expected to give Madonna an ancient oil lamp and a coin from the Byzantine period. The ministry also hopes to use images of Madonna to promote the country abroad.

But not everyone was so welcoming.

A small group of peace activists demonstrated at Rachel’s Tomb in the West Bank—one of the stop’s on Madonna’s itinerary—to draw attention to the plight of Palestinians living under Israeli military rule.

“I hope she’s aware of where she is going,” said Angela Godfrey-Goldstein, one of the protesters.

The itinerary also includes stops at the Western Wall in Jerusalem; the northern city of Safed, a center of Kabbalah; Rachel’s Tomb, the traditional burial place of the biblical matriarch; and the grave of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, author of the Zohar, the core text of Kabbalah.

Rabbi Yaakov Silber of the Merkaz Harav Jewish seminary in Jerusalem said it was hard to imagine a rabbi would be willing to teach Madonna.

FEMA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION
BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Martha Stewart asks to serve sentence soon

By ERIN McCLAM
AP WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Even at a wrenching moment of surrender, Martha Stewart was—as always—under impeccable control. Her announcement Wednesday that she would report to prison as soon as possible came in a light-bathed studio, before a brilliant backdrop of color swatches, perfectly choreographed for television.

She lamented that she would miss her beloved pets—cats, dogs, horses, canaries and chickens—and hoped to be free in time for her cherished spring gardening.

“I must reclaim my good life,” the 63-year-old millionaire businesswoman declared.

“I must return to my good works and allow those around me who work with me to do the same.” Her lawyers stressed that her appeal would proceed.

Speaking before a bank of cameras in a cavernous room that her company uses to test recipes and photograph products, Stewart said she hoped to end a period of “immense difficulty, immense sacrifice and immense agony” for herself and her media empire, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc.

Shares in Martha Stewart Living rose 12 cents to close at \$11.26 Wednesday on the New York Stock Exchange. The stock had been trading around \$19 per share before Stewart’s name was tied to the scandal.

People close to the domestic

entrepreneur said they expected her to report to prison—most likely to a facility in Danbury, Conn., near her home, or possibly in Florida—in a matter of weeks. Her lawyers have asked a federal judge to lift a stay that had been placed on her sentence while she appeals her guilty verdict on charges of lying to investigators about a 2001 stock sale.

After the five months in prison, Stewart still must serve five months of house arrest. She has said she will spend that time—during which she will be allowed to work—at her 153-acre horse-country estate north of New York City.

Her lawyers said they were confident a federal appeals court would eventually overturn the verdict, delivered by a New York jury in March.

But a delay motion filed by Peter Bacanovic, the former stockbroker convicted along with Stewart, means the case will not be argued until next year, and Stewart said she was acting to bring “finality” to a personal nightmare.



AP
Martha Stewart speaks at her offices in New York Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2004. Stewart announced she will seek to move her case directly to the sentencing phase.

“The only way to reclaim my life and the quality of life for all those related to me with certainty now is to serve my sentence—

surrender to the authorities so that I can quickly return as soon as possible to the life and the work that I love,” she said.

The 10-minute announcement was a striking example of Stewart’s trademark image: a tightly controlled one, of good taste, gracious living and self-discipline.

Stewart stood in front of a brilliant backdrop of more than 2,000 color swatches, and to her right was a dining table that looked as if it was about to be used for one of her television programs on entertaining. She was emotional at times, nearly crying at one point.

She spoke wistfully of how much she will miss holiday traditions and her pets—“my two beloved, fun-loving dogs, my seven lively cats, my canaries, my horses and even my chickens.”

“It’s odd what becomes of immense importance when one realizes when one’s freedom is about to be curtailed,” she said, “and it is frightening and difficult to have to grasp these realizations.”

Popular artists in Vegas for music awards

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Usher didn’t need any “Confessions” to prove he’s the world’s best male artist. The singer earned three 2004 World Music Awards on Wednesday, while Outkast—the big winner at this year’s Grammys—also took home three awards.

Buxom actress Pamela Anderson wore a tight, black miniskirt to present Usher with his first award and joked with the audience about searching for a boyfriend.

“So, Pamela, I don’t mean to start any rumors, but I’m single,” Usher told the former “Baywatch” star.

For the first time, the awards show was broadcast from the United States after previously being held in Monaco.

The two-hour show honoring

- World’s Best Male Artist:** Usher
- World’s Best Female Artist:** Norah Jones
- World’s Best Group:** Outkast
- Best Pop Male Artist:** Usher
- Best Pop Female Artist:** Norah Jones
- Best Pop Group:** Outkast
- Best Pop/Rock Artist:** Avril Lavigne
- Best Rock Artist:** Evanescence
- Best R&B Artist:** Usher
- Best R&B Female Artist:** Alicia Keyes
- Best Rap/Hip-Hop Artist:** Outkast
- Best New Female Artist:** Hilary Duff
- Best New Male Artist:** Kanye West
- Best New Group:** Maroon 5
- Diamond Award:** Celine Dion
- Outstanding Contribution to the Music Industry Award:** Clive Davis
- Best-selling Artist by country:** Australia, Delta Goodrem; United Kingdom, Dido; Ireland, Westlife; Netherlands, DJ Tiesto; Ukraine, Ruslana; Russia, Philip Kirkorov; Germany, Sarah Connor; Africa, Latifah; Scandinavia, The Rasmus; Italy, Eros Ramazzotti; Switzerland, DJ Bobo; Spain, Alejandro Sanz; France, Kyo; China, Jay Chou; Japan, Hikaru Utada.

the world’s best-selling recording artists was broadcast live on ABC throughout the United States, Mexico and Canada from the Thomas & Mack Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

An additional hour filled with awards and performances by international artists was taped for a later worldwide broadcast to more than 150 countries.

Besides world’s best male artist, Usher was honored as best pop male artist and best R&B artist. His latest album, “Confessions,” has sold more than 5 million copies.

Outkast won for world’s best group, best pop group and best rap/hip-hop artist. Norah Jones also was a big winner, winning awards for world’s best female artist and best pop female artist.

Roy Horn recalls tiger attack in interview

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Nearly a year after a tiger attack left him partly paralyzed, Roy Horn, one-half of the illusionist duo Siegfried & Roy, for the first time described his memories of the mauling during a television interview that aired Wednesday.

In an interview with Maria Shriver on NBC, Horn said he fainted on stage during the fateful performance and that the 380-pound tiger was only trying to help him by dragging him off stage.

“It’s just my body. I have high blood pressure,” Horn said, referring to why he fainted Oct. 3, 2003, at a hotel in Las Vegas.

Asked by Shriver what he was thinking at the time, Horn said: “Dear God, let this be just a bad nightmare.”

Horn was attacked by the 380-pound tiger named Mon-

tecore during a live performance at The Mirage hotel-casino. The 7-year-old tiger bit into the performer’s neck and dragged him off stage. A show employee broke the animal’s grip by using a fire extinguisher.

Horn survived but remains partially paralyzed following a stroke he suffered immediately following the attack. His speech was distorted by a slight lisp.

During the hour-long NBC special “Siegfried & Roy: The Miracle,” doctors described how they resuscitated Horn, whose heart stopped for about a minute.

Horn sustained four deep wounds, including two punctures in the back of his head and two deep cuts on the front of his neck, the doctors said. He also had a stroke. The tiger’s teeth had damaged an artery that carries oxygen to the brain,

and crushed Horn’s trachea.

A procedure was performed in which doctors removed part of Horn’s skull to allow the brain to swell. The section of skull was sewn into his abdomen until it was replaced weeks later.

On the operating table, Horn told Shriver he had a near-death experience.

“I saw a bank of white light, and then I saw all my beloved animals,” Horn said. “For a moment I stepped out of my body.”

Horn, who now uses a motorized wheelchair, was shown undergoing physical therapy—walking, kicking a soccer ball and lifting weights.

“Every inch of your skin hurts. ... I cry to sleep,” he said.

Horn’s partner, Siegfried Fischbacher, said he will do whatever it takes to help.

“If he’s not going to be able to

use his left arm, then I’m going to be his left arm,” Fischbacher said during the interview. “It breaks my heart sometimes. But most of the time, it’s heartwarming, it’s bitter and it’s sweet. Now I know life is a gift.”

Horn said he is living life without regrets or animosity.

“I feel I have so many projects and I haven’t completed them yet,” he said.

There’s no talk of reviving the illusionists’ show, which debuted in 1990, but Siegfried & Roy are involved in NBC’s new animated show “Father of the Pride.”

The special, produced by NBC’s entertainment division, marked Shriver’s return to prime-time television. The wife of California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger took a leave from the network’s news division after his election.

WALLACE



Accused Zeta-Jones stalker to stand trial

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge on Wednesday ordered a woman accused of stalking actress Catherine Zeta-Jones to stand trial.

Superior Court Judge Patricia M. Schnegg issued her ruling following a preliminary hearing for Dawnette Knight, 33, who was arrested June 3 at her Beverly Hills home. She has pleaded not guilty to a count of stalking and 24 counts of making criminal threats.

The charges involve more than two dozen letters sent to actor Michael Douglas, the husband of Zeta-Jones. One letter said: "We are going to slice her up like meat on a bone and feed her to the dogs."

In another letter, Knight allegedly apologized, claiming she had been in love with Douglas.

The judge ordered Knight held on \$1 million bail and to return to court Sept. 27 for arraignment.

Both Zeta-Jones, the star of "Chicago" and "Intolerable Cruelty," and Douglas testified during the hearing. "I've never in my life had anything or had anyone say anything to me so satanic," Zeta-Jones testified.

In a ruling last week, another judge found Knight mentally competent to stand trial. Her case had been halted July 30 pending a psychiatric evaluation after she suffered from an overdose of barbiturates.

Actress Catherine Zeta-Jones arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "The Terminal" at the Academy Theatre in this June 9, 2004 file photo in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Bride covers poor planning with show of bad manners

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

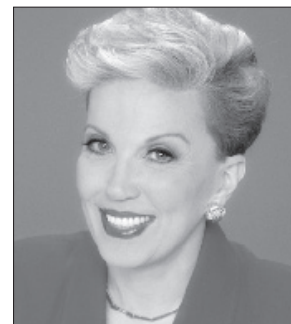
DEAR ABBY: I received a wedding invitation from "Lindy," the sister of my co-worker, "Lara." I don't know Lindy personally, but I assumed that Lara had asked her to invite my husband and me because we often socialize together.

When the invitation arrived, I immediately RSVP'd that we would attend. When I told Lara, she seemed pleased.

About three weeks before the wedding, Lindy called to say she had "inadvertently" sent me the invitation thinking I was someone else she knew. She said she had too many guests, and therefore I was being uninvited! I responded graciously, even though I felt humiliated. Lara never mentioned the subject to me.

By the way, other co-workers were invited. Now I feel stupid. Was this rude, or is this kind of thing no big deal?

LEFT OUT IN LOUISVILLE



Dear Abby

DEAR LEFT OUT: The bride overbooked her wedding, and the way she cut the guest list was brutal. Please don't blame Lara for her sister's bad manners, and don't waste time and energy holding a grudge. Since you don't know Lindy personally, it's unlikely your paths will cross again.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "George," and I have been married a year and are expecting a baby. I recently discovered that he has been viewing gay pornography every day for months on our home computer. I have tracked it using the history file, and finally confronted him.

George says it is just curiosity and that he is not gay or bisexual. He says he has never been with a man, nor would he want to. George did admit he has been viewing those sites for about three years.

This has left me feeling betrayed and questioning my husband's sexuality. How can a churchgoing, married man who's expecting a baby, who appears normal and heterosexual, be viewing gay pornography Web sites daily?

TRUSTING IN TEXAS

DEAR TRUSTING: Because he finds them interesting and exciting and is getting something out of it. Bear in mind that being gay does not prevent a person from being religious, married, virile (or fertile), or "normal" in appearance. Your husband may be so deeply closeted that he hasn't even admitted to himself that he's gay. Your next move should be to insist that you and your husband consult a marriage counselor.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: I am a 11-year-old girl who wears glasses. I was wondering: When is a good age to get contact lenses? I realize that it is a responsibility, but how can I tell if I'm responsible enough?

WISHING FOR CONTACTS IN NAPA, CALIF.

DEAR WISHING: That's something you and your parents should ask your eye doctor. I recently read that although doctors used to discourage children under the age of 12 from wearing contacts, the age barrier has recently been revised downward. If you are responsible about chores, school assignments and your grooming, I see no reason you wouldn't be responsible enough to handle contact lenses.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS, and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Hefner inducted into erotic hall of fame

LOS ANGELES (AP)—So when are pajamas worthy of a museum exhibit? When they belong to Hugh Hefner.

The Playboy lothario was honored as the first inductee into the Erotic Museum of Hollywood's hall of fame for being "one of the most democratizing forces in sexuality in the last century," according to the museum.

"Hugh Hefner's brand of preened perfection became the standard of beauty for a nation," the museum stated on its Web site.



Hefner

Hefner said Wednesday he donated some artifacts to his exhibit, which was unveiled Tuesday in a ceremony hosted by comedian Bill Maher.

"They have a pair of my pajamas, slippers, a pipe and a bunny costume," Hefner told The Associated Press. "And a very handsome oil portrait that was apparently painted in Russia."

Hefner said the Erotic Museum takes a scholarly approach to the subject of erotica and sexuality.

"It's done in a very classy way, but of course because the subject is sex it will prompt titillation, but that says a great deal about us. And it supports the notion that a museum that takes sexuality seriously is a good idea."

Other upcoming inductees into the "erotic hall of fame" will include burlesque-trained actress Mae West, psychoanalyst Dr. Sigmund Freud, birth control advocate Margaret Sanger and sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer.

Carnie Wilson says she's pregnant

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Carnie Wilson, whose gastric bypass surgery five years ago was broadcast on the Internet, is expecting her first child.

Wilson, a member of the female trio Wilson Phillips, announced her pregnancy in an interview to air Wednesday on "Entertainment Tonight."

She and her husband, musician Rob Bonfiglio, have been married for four years.

"I am expecting my first child. I can't believe it. It's such a miracle, such a beautiful miracle," Wilson told the syndicated entertainment TV show.

"It won't be a problem eating for two—

that's the good part!" she added.

She didn't disclose the baby's due date.

"My husband thinks we're going to have a girl and we've already named her—Lola Brianna," said Wilson, the 36-year-old daughter of Beach Boy Brian Wilson.

She lost 150 pounds after she underwent gastric bypass surgery in August 1999.

Members of Wilson Phillips are Wilson; her sister, Wendy Wilson; and Chynna Phillips, daughter of John and Michelle Phillips of the '60s group The Mamas and the Papas.

Kerry to appear on Letterman on Monday

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sen. John Kerry will probably avoid the "Will it Float?" routine but might opt to deliver the "Top 10 List" when he appears on the "The Late Show with David Letterman" on Monday.

The Democratic presidential nominee has appeared on such late-night comedy programs as "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and rode a motorcycle onto the set of "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," but he has never been on the Letterman program, a frequent destination for candidates. In the 2000 campaign, George W. Bush appeared on the CBS show.

Late-night comedy shows provide campaign news to a growing number of people, according to a poll earlier this year by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. One-fifth of those ages 18-to-29 said they regularly learn about the campaign from such programs.



Democratic Presidential candidate Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass, speaks to the Detroit Economic Club in Detroit, Mich. Wednesday.

In making the announcement Wednesday, CBS also said Kerry's appearance marks the start of the fall season for Letterman.

Separately, both Bush and Kerry have been invited to appear in their own half-hour programs on BET, the Black Entertainment Television network.

The network's founder and CEO, Robert Johnson, has invited the two candidates, ask-

ing that they appear on separate airings of BET Nightly News to speak on issues important to the channel's viewers. If the candidates accept, the format will be decided with input by each campaign, BET said.

"It's time that both candidates send a true signal of seriousness to African-American voters that our issues, opinions and, ultimately, our votes really matter," Johnson said in a news release.

Johnny Ramone, of 'The Ramones,' dies at 55

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Johnny Ramone, guitarist and co-founder of the seminal punk band "The Ramones," has died. He was 55.

Ramone died in his sleep Wednesday afternoon at his Los Angeles home surrounded by friends and family, his publicist said. He had battled prostate cancer for five years, and was

hospitalized in June at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Ramone, born John Cummings, was one of the original members of the Ramones, whose hit songs "I Wanna Be Sedated" and "Blitzkrieg Bop," among others, earned the band induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002.

The band's singer, Joey Ra-

mone, whose real name was Jeff Hyman, died in 2001 of lymphatic cancer. Bassist Dee Dee Ramone, who was born Douglas Colvin, died from a drug overdose in 2002.

Johnny Ramone founded "The Ramones" in 1974 with Joey Ramone, DeeDee Ramone and Tommy Ramone, the only surviving member of the original band.

Pastimes



Woods' top ranking on line at NEC Invitational

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP GOLF WRITER

AKRON, Ohio (AP)—Tiger Woods already lost out on the majors. Next up could be his No. 1 ranking.

The top candidate is Vijay Singh, who showed up at Firestone just 18 hours after winning the PGA Championship acting as if nothing had changed and he was ready to play the next tournament.

"You see some guys win and they have a little lull for a week, or they don't commit to the next week, or it's tiring for them to win," PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem said. "I saw him (Monday), and he's just ... he's just Vijay."

The next time Finchem sees him, he might be looking at the No. 1 player in the world.

Singh's playoff victory at Whistling Straits brought the 41-year-old Fijian to the brink of a goal not many thought possible two years ago.

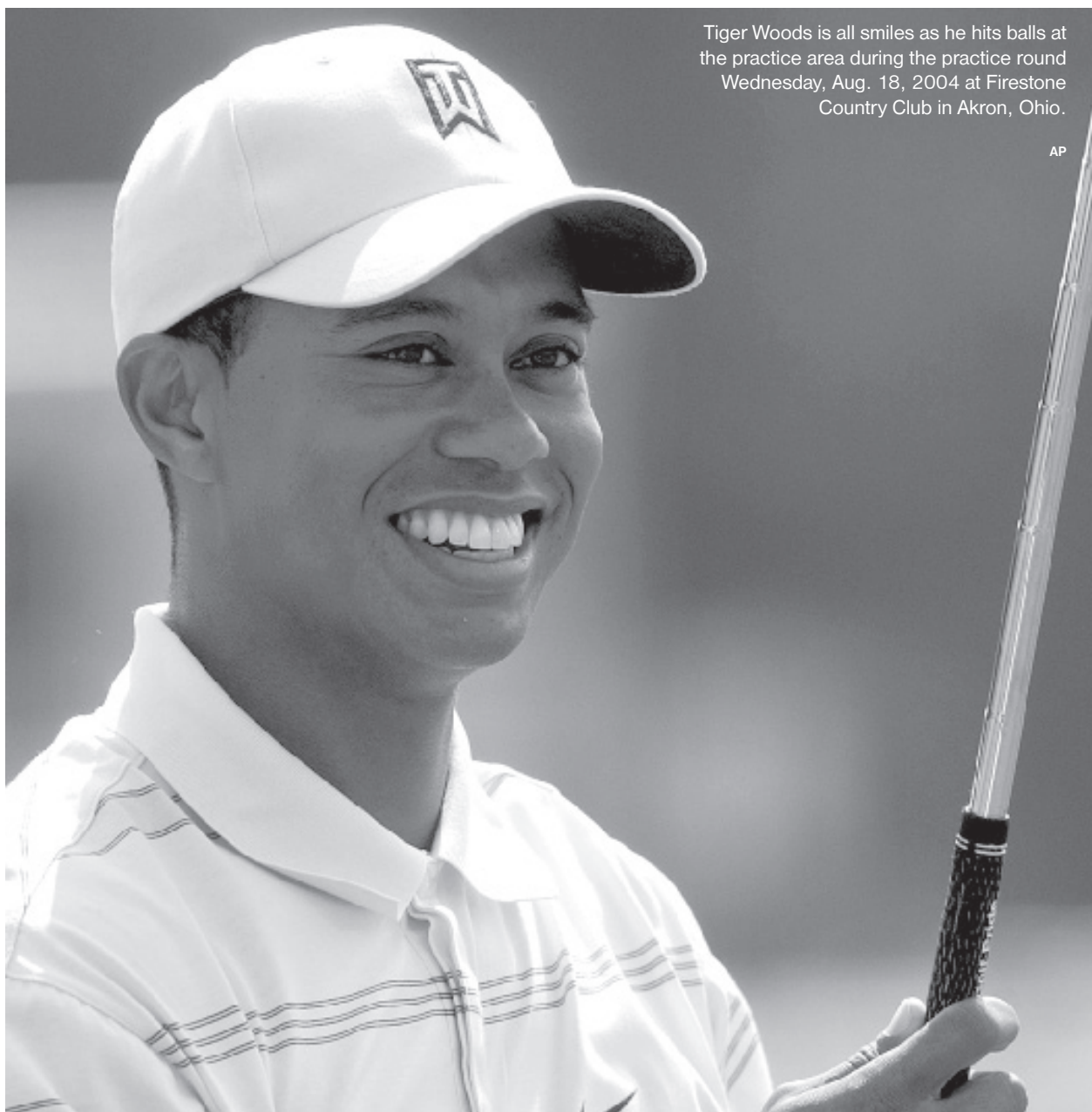
Having closed the gap to a mere one-tenth of a point, Singh needs only to finish ahead of Woods at the NEC Invitational to end Woods' record reign of 262 consecutive weeks atop the world ranking.

"I want to finish No. 1, and if I can do that, that would be great," Singh said. "That will be the ultimate goal for me - to win a major, win the money list and player of the year, and at the same time be No. 1 in the world. I'm very close, but my focus this week is this tournament."

"If I can pull this one off, then I'll probably take the rest of the year off."

Singh laughed, although everyone already knew he was kidding.

He loves to play tournament golf, so much that he thinks the world ranking system works against him. Singh already has won five times this year, compared with one victory for Woods. A year ago, Singh was a four-time winner and narrowly lost the PGA Tour



Tiger Woods is all smiles as he hits balls at the practice area during the practice round Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004 at Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio.

AP

player of the year award to Woods and his five victories.

What counts is consistency, which is why Singh is so close to the top.

That is how Woods has stayed there for so long - a record 332 weeks since turning pro eight years ago, breaking the record Monday that Greg Norman (331

weeks) had set over a 12-year span.

Woods has been No. 1 for the last 262 weeks, dating to his victory in the 1999 PGA Championship.

And he is well aware that it could be gone over the course of four rounds on a Firestone South course that is playing longer and tougher than ever.

"As far as the No. 1 ranking, it's certainly a point of honor," Woods said Wednesday. "You've had to play hard and you've had to play well, and for me to have done it for as long as Greg has, I've been very consistent."

But it's not just consistency. Winning is a large part of the No.

1 ranking, which is why Woods is on the verge of losing it. His only victory this year was the Match Play Championship in February, and with only five tournaments left on his schedule, he most likely will end his streak of five consecutive years with at least five victories.

"Greg was No. 1 in the world for a long period of time and he was winning two to four a year, and I did the same thing," Woods said. "I did five-plus for five straight years, and now Vijay has won five times this year. That's how you do it. You don't get to No. 1 in the world by finishing top 10. You have to win."

And that's why Woods is holding out hope that No. 1 still belongs to him until someone takes it away.

His game has not been sharp all year, although Woods can't argue with the venue.

Firestone South has been one of his favorite tracks since he turned pro, never finishing lower than fifth in his six appearances and winning the NEC Invitational three straight times (1999-2001) in a variety of ways - by one shot, by 12 shots and in a seven-hole playoff against Jim Furyk for his only victory in the summer of '01.

"I think any time you come to an event where you've won before and you've had success, you automatically feel comfortable and confident, if your game is not up to form or if you're playing great," Woods said. "I've come in both ways into this tournament, and for some reason I've played well."

The NEC Invitational is for players on the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup teams, the top 50 in the world ranking and winners of top tournaments around the world.

Ravens leave door open for Deion to play

By **DAVID GINSBURG**
AP SPORTS WRITER



WESTMINSTER, Md. (AP)—The Baltimore Ravens are excited about the prospect of having Deion Sanders come out of retirement and be a part of their defensive backfield.

The question now is: Will he take them up on their offer?

The Ravens have told Sanders that if he wants to end his retirement of three years, he would be welcome to join the team. Sanders is working out at his Dallas home in an effort to determine if his 37-year-old body can take the punishment of playing in the NFL.

"He's obviously doing his due diligence to see if this is something he really wants to do," Ravens coach Brian Billick said Wednesday. "Certainly we'd love to have him in, and when we get to that point, he'll be in."

Ravens safety Corey Fuller, a good friend of Sanders, isn't so sure that Sanders is ready to put on a helmet and shoulder pads for the first time since 2000, when he was a member of the Washington Redskins. Sanders formally announced his retirement the day before the Redskins opened camp in 2001.

"I talk to him every day," Fuller said. "I know what he's going to do. The man said he's not coming. He's got four kids. It's not because he can't play anymore. It's just that the man has a lot going on outside of football."

But the Ravens are convinced that Sanders has yet to arrive at a final decision, and they're prepared to let him take his time in deciding if he wants to join the team.

"It's far enough along that when he feels he's ready, he's in," Billick said. "Deion is a professional. He doesn't want to come in here unless he's ready to go. We'll give him that kind of space, and when he feels he's physically at the right spot, then we'd love to have him."

Sanders made a name for himself at cornerback, a far more demanding position than where the Ravens would use him - as a fifth defensive back in passing situations. Therefore, Billick isn't worried about the possibility of Sanders perhaps being a step slower than when he was known as Prime Time.

"He's a special individual with special talents. He's not too old, I can promise you that," Billick said. "It will be a work in progress to a degree, but he's not too old. He's been out of it for

three years, which means he's fresh."

On that point, Fuller concurred. "Deion is in great shape. He has a gym in his house and works out all the time. But when you get older, it comes down to your mind," Fuller said. "When you've been off for three years, you get attached to other things."

Sanders, a former major league outfielder, worked out with the Texas Rangers prior to Wednesday night's game against the Cleveland Indians. He shagged flies in the outfield and took swings in the batting cage.

As he left the field, Sanders was evasive when asked about returning to the NFL.

"I'm here to talk about baseball," Sanders said. "Baseball questions only. I really miss baseball. I didn't know how much I missed it, being around the guys."

If Sanders wants to play for the Ravens, defensive coordinator Mike Nolan would happily draw up a game plan that would include him in the backfield.

"Adding depth is one thing, but adding quality depth is a whole different thing," Nolan said. "A player like that comes along, we'll do what fits that player. It will allow us to be more aggressive than we already are."

A player like that allows you to do just about anything."

Most of the Ravens are excited about the possibility, too.

"Deion brings excitement to the game," linebacker Adalius Thomas said. "I used to watch him as a kid, and now you get a chance to sit down with him and pick his brain. It will be very exciting when he does, uh, if he does come back."

Ravens wide receiver Kevin Johnson is excited about the prospect of running in practice against cornerback Chris McAlister, who is expected to arrive in camp next week, and Sanders, one of the finest defensive backs of the past 20 years.

"You figure, with him, Chris and Gary Baxter, you're going to get the best of both worlds," Johnson said. "You're going up against Chris, who's the best of his time right now, and Deion, one of the best of his time."

But the addition of Sanders could spell trouble for a player such as rookie cornerback Lance Frazier, who's striving to be part of the team.

"That would be another roster spot, right at the position that I'm playing," Frazier said. "That will get me either booted or put on practice squad."

Knicks re-sign forward Baker



NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks re-signed forward Vin Baker on Wednesday.

The 11-year veteran averaged 9.8 points and 5.2 rebounds in 54 games for the Knicks and Boston Celtics last season. He signed as a free agent in March, averaging 6.6 points and 4.1 rebounds in the final 17 games for the Knicks.

"Vin gave us a solid presence off the bench at the end of last season and in the playoffs," Knicks President Isiah Thomas said. "With a fresh start at training camp with the team, we know he'll be an even more productive force."

The 6-foot-11 Baker averaged 14.3 minutes in four playoff games, contributing 5.5 points and 3.0 rebounds in the Knicks' first-round loss to the New Jersey Nets.

Baker was the eighth overall pick by the Milwaukee Bucks in the 1993 draft and a four-time All-Star, but his battle with alcoholism led to his release by Boston.

Baker was shooting more than 50 percent for the Celtics before he was suspended—and subsequently had his contract terminated—for violating terms of his alcohol treatment program.

Woods aims to regain form at British Open

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP SPORTS COLUMNIST

TROON, Scotland (AP)—Tiger Woods has been hitting fairways this week, and his caddie, Steve Williams, hasn't been hitting anyone.

The British Open doesn't start until Thursday, of course, and things can change just as quickly as the quirky weather off the coast of west Scotland. Woods doesn't need to be reminded of that.

The last time the British Open was held in Scotland, he was not only an overwhelming favorite, but British bookies also fancied him to finish off the Grand Slam that year.

Incredibly, just two years later, he's not even the pick to win this week at Royal Troon. That honor would go to Ernie Els, who just a short time ago seemed baffled by the idea he could actually beat Woods when it really mattered.

Now, it seems, anyone—and that really means anyone—can beat Woods. Eight players have won major championships since he took the U.S. Open at Bethpage, N.Y., in 2002.

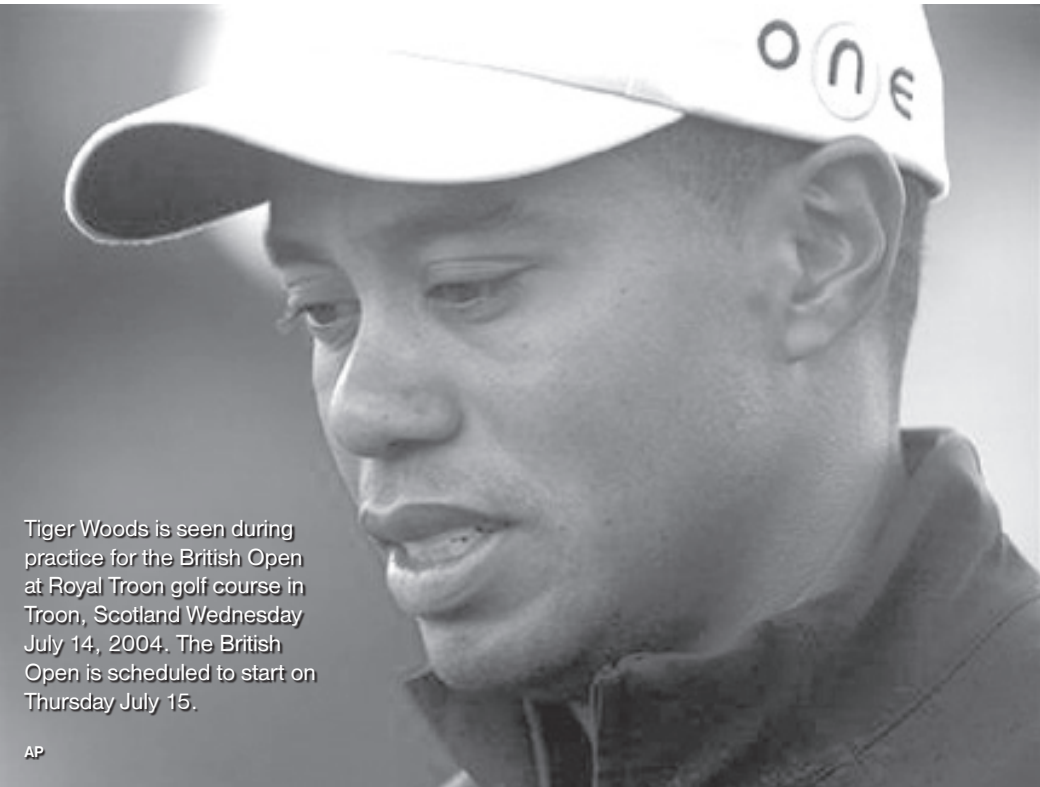
With each wayward drive, Woods sinks a little bit more toward mediocrity. The mystique is gone, and so is the intimidation other players used to feel every time he stuck a tee in the ground.

"Pure and simple, he can't drive the ball in the fairway," Nick Price said. "From all I've seen now the last five months, his off-the-tee game is so erratic, and there's no pattern to it because he's losing it right and left. Until such time as he starts getting the ball in the fairway, he's going to struggle.

"You have to be a great driver of the ball to win major championships."

Indeed you do, and Woods once was. Which, of course, brings us to the question of what Woods has been doing to become that great driver again.

Well, he's got a new driver for one, a big fat graphite shafted Nike that's just the type he once



Tiger Woods is seen during practice for the British Open at Royal Troon golf course in Troon, Scotland Wednesday July 14, 2004. The British Open is scheduled to start on Thursday July 15.

AP

scorned. He's longer than ever, but length has never been a problem for Woods.

Presumably he's been out practicing with it, though you might wonder where he's getting the time. He's got a fiancée and an increasing number of business interests and recreational pursuits away from golf.

Some of those are in Las Vegas, where Butch Harmon, his former swing guru, teaches. Woods' visits, though, have nothing to do with getting instruction from his estranged coach.

Last month he jetted there for a few days of gambling after finishing well off the pace at the U.S. Open. And just hours after he finished his final round at the Western Open near Chicago, he was spotted partying at a posh casino nightclub.

Coincidence? Maybe. Woods, like anyone else, has the right to blow off steam. He's certainly earned it after bearing the many responsibilities that came with being Tiger Woods over the last few years.

But Woods became great because of his singular focus on his golf game, as his father, Earl Woods, would be more than willing

to tell you. He became great by constant hours of practicing to come up with a short game as great as the shots he could seemingly manufacture at will off the tee.

Whether the same focus is still there is hard to figure out. Woods doesn't let anyone inside his private life, and he's not about to tell anyone what he's doing.

But if last month's U.S. Open is any indication, there are cracks in the armor. At Shinnecock Hills, Woods feuded publicly with Harmon even while his drives were going sideways, and he wasn't a factor on the weekend.

At the same time, his caddie became so annoyed at a photographer that he kicked his camera, then later went into the crowd and grabbed another one from an astonished spectator.

The boss doesn't like distractions, you know.

"I've always played my best when I've gone out and played—and stayed—focused on what I have to do and not worry about anything else," Woods said Tuesday.

Woods didn't say much else. He's become more taciturn than ever, insisting as always that everything is fine, while at the

same time refusing to be drawn into any specifics about his game or his swing.

Harmon speculated at the U.S. Open that his former student was in a "bit of denial" about everything, a statement that angered Woods mostly because it was made publicly.

Since then, Woods and Harmon have chatted and Woods said they patched up some of their differences. None of that chat concerned his golf swing, though, and Woods still stubbornly clings to the notion he can fix things himself.

Maybe he can. Maybe Woods knows something no one else knows and will find a way to do something he hasn't done since last October—win a stroke-play tournament.

Winning, of course, is the best way to quiet critics. If Woods can win his second British Open, people will quickly quit talking about his slump and return to talking about his chances of beating Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 major championship titles.

And maybe his caddie will get a clue and quit bullying people on his way around the course.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS		PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.
MLB HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.		Olympics U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.
NBA ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier. BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract. CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay. DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option. DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option. GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract. LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks. LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick. MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract. MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet. PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract. PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-year contract. SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih. TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract. UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.		College AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach. DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach. EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer. HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach. N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach. NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach. NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky. OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations. PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler. RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach. SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach. SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach. SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach. ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach. TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach. WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.
NFL GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.		

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS		
Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4

Armstrong, UConn pair win ESPY Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong was a repeat winner as male athlete of the year, and Connecticut basketball stars Diana Taurasi and Emeka Okafor were also honored Wednesday night at the 12th annual ESPY Awards.

Armstrong is currently attempting to win the Tour de France for the sixth straight time.

Taurasi won the best college female athlete for the second straight year as well as the best female athlete, while Okafor was chosen the best male college athlete. The two led their respective teams to NCAA championships last spring.

For the first time, fans determined the winners in all 36 categories, including the

19 cross-cutter honors that pit athletes from different sports against each other. More than 10 1/2 million votes were cast between June 21 and July 9.

Armstrong was honored as the best male athlete over home run king Barry Bonds, quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, and NBA star Kevin Garnett.

Taurasi was selected over golfer Annika Sorenstam and tennis star Justine Henin-Hardenne in the female athlete of the year category.

The Detroit Pistons, who beat the Los Angeles Lakers in last month's NBA Finals, were picked as the best team over the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots, World Series-winning Florida Marlins, Stanley

Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning and the UConn men's and women's basketball teams.

Detroit's Larry Brown won the best coach/manager award, and the Pistons were the winners in the new best upset category.

Among other winners were Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James, best breakthrough athlete; Masters champion Phil Mickelson, best male golfer and top championship performance; Manning, best NFL player; Garnett, best NBA player; Lauren Jackson, best WNBA player, Antonio Tarver, best boxer; Stewart Elliott, best jockey; Andy Roddick, best male tennis player, Gail Devers, female track and field, and Serena Williams, best female tennis player.

Prosecutor asks to retry Jayson Williams

FLEMINGTON, N.J. (AP)—The prosecutor in the Jayson Williams manslaughter case wants to retry the former NBA star in Hunterdon County.

In papers filed with the trial judge on Wednesday, First Assistant Hunterdon County Prosecutor Steven Lember argued that the retrial should be moved to Hunterdon County, where limousine driver Costas Christofi was killed by a blast from a shotgun handled by Williams.

"Just as the perceived existence of pretrial publicity led the court to change venue to Somerset County, the even-more extensive trial publicity in Somerset County necessitates a return to Hunterdon County," Lember wrote.

Superior Court Judge Edward Coleman moved the first trial to Somerset County because of extensive pretrial publicity.

The 36-year-old Williams was acquitted in April of ag-

gravated manslaughter, aggravated assault and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, but was convicted on four counts related to his efforts to cover up the shooting.

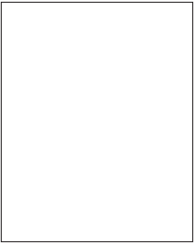
The jury deadlocked on the remaining reckless manslaughter count and a mistrial was declared. Lember decided to retry the case on that one charge.

The retrial is scheduled to start Jan. 10 in Somerville.

Christofi died in 2002 in Williams' Alexandria Township mansion.

If the judge denies Lember's request for a change of venue, the prosecutor has asked that a jury be brought in from a neighboring county with demographics similar to Hunterdon.

Lember will ask Coleman to reconsider his decision not to allow testimony about Williams' prior gun use, including the alleged shooting of his dog.



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